

the Commemorative Trail



*The newsletter of the Society for U.S. Commemorative Coins
912 Bob Wallace Avenue Huntsville, Alabama, 35801
Membership: \$12.50 per year includes newsletter subscription.*

FALL, 1985



In This Issue...

"A March Through History," by Joe Wesp

Society Officers : August, 1985 - August, 1986

President - Frank DuVall

Vice President - Anthony Swiatek

Secretary - Helen Carmody

Treasurer - Don Carmody

Program Chairperson - Gene Neel

Publicity Chairperson - Ralph Langham

Newsletter Editor - Ray Mercer

*** The Editorial Line ***

by Ray Mercer, Member #20

On The Cover, Joe Wesp Strikes Again...

Welcome to the Fall, 1985 edition of THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL! Although your Editor normally has the pleasure of reading many interesting articles from the membership, this issue's feature story, "A March Through History," contains one of the most entertaining literary ideas that has crossed my desk to date! I hope its novelty entices a large part of the membership into considering similar projects and I look forward to receiving more of this type of innovative material in the future.

Many of you will remember its author, JOE WESP, from his crossword puzzle in our last issue and by a previous article on how he began collecting Commemorative coins, but I think even Joe has outdone himself with this latest endeavor! Believe it or not, Joe actually took the time out to travel to the site of the Burnside Bridge and write us a story about his resulting adventure complete with an outstanding set of black & white glossy photographs (the best kind for easy reproduction)!

This zealous project goes on to boldly certify the true purpose of our Society! We were not formulated to measure percentage point gains (except in elections!), endorse glowing investment "hype," or label anyone's coins as perfect, but we were created to encourage and explore the endless fun of collecting this fascinating series. Joe's article captures the true spirit of numismatics and after you read it, please consider submitting an article of your own!

The Voice Of The People...

Even though, since our last literary chat, an entire four months of water has flowed under the proverbial bridge, I'm sure the outcome of our Society's elections is still buzzing around in everyone's mind. In case you haven't heard the good news yet, all a curious soul needs to do is to cast a wandering eye up to the top of this page to see the list of our newly elected Officers for 1985 - 1986!

I am also happy to report yours truly has survived our organization's election process (only three assassination attempts out of a possible five) and it feels great to haunt these pages once again as your Editor in Chief! In spite of all the tedious work, I truly enjoy this honored position and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your flattering support!

As promised in the last issue of THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL, here is a COMPLETE four-star trail of the election with a grand total of 317 votes cast out of a possible 550...

Election Results

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*
* President                               Vice President
* -----
* Frank DuVall - 300 (94.6%)      Anthony Swiatek - 137 (43.2%)      Steele Eunson - 21 (6.6%)
* Abstain - 11 (3.5%)            Mike Fuljenz - 98 (30.9%)        Abstain - 9 (2.8%)
* Write-In - 6* (1.9%)           Bruce Amspacher - 52 (16.4%)     Write-In - 0 (0.0%)
*
* Secretary                             Treasurer                             Program Chairperson
* -----
* Helen Carmody - 313 (98.7%)     Don Carmody - 312 (98.4%)        Gene Neel - 275 (86.8%)
* Abstain - 3 (1.0%)              Abstain - 3 (1.0%)              Abstain - 42 (13.2%)
* Write-In - 1* (.3%)             Write-In - 2* (.6%)             Write-In - 0 (0.0%)
*
* Publicity Chairperson           Newsletter Editor                  Emperor
* -----
* Ralph Langham - 139 (43.8%)     Ray Mercer - 305 (96.2%)         Anthony Swiatek - 32
* Douglas Jennings - 61 (19.2%)   Abstain - 11 (3.5%)             Assorted Pretenders
* Michael Sullivan - 44 (13.9%)   Write-In - 1* (.3%)             to the throne since
* Abstain - 73 (23.1%)            Death Threats - 0 (0.0%)        assassinated - 12
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*WRITE-IN'S: PRESIDENT - Anthony Swiatek (3), Gene Neel (1), Jack Ehrmantraut (1), and a "non-member" (1). SECRETARY - Valerie Olander (1). TREASURER - Anthony Swiatek (1) and Mike Fuljenz (1). NEWSLETTER EDITOR - a "non-member" (1).

Well, there you have it, the voice of the people! All ballots and envelopes were first tabulated by our official ballot counter, BOB ARNEL, and then shipped to our Secretary, HELEN CARMODY, for a final check! After everything was found in order, the winners were officially declared and our first national election was over! Sounds simple, doesn't it? Well, don't kid yourself as there was quite a bit of physical labor AND responsibility involved! I would now like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Arnel for going to the post office everyday and meticulously tabulating all those ballots. It was a time consuming job and I'm sure the ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP thanks him for his unselfish support of our organization!

FOR YOUR GENERAL INFORMATION: if a voter did not indicate a choice for an office on his/her ballot sheet, we counted this lack of enthusiasm as an "Abstain." In addition, the reason why some write-in votes are simply labeled, "non-member" is your officers felt we should only name Society members in our election results. We also received about eight ballots that were postmarked after August 1st and couldn't include them in the election, but that's the way things go. We are sorry for those of you who missed the ANNOUNCED deadline of August 1st, but we had to stick by the rules. However, never one to waste votes, I posted all the late arrivals down to Nicaragua and I'm sure they'll be more than happy to use them in their next general election.

You should be proud of yourself!...

I'm sure I speak for ALL the candidates when I say, "Thank you for your amazing response to our election and for your obvious concern for our club!" Most organizations consider a one-third voter turnout to be impressive, but our Society left this humble estimate standing in the dust! We experienced a total ballot return of 57.6%! How about the size of those tomatoes? The candidates quickly discovered our members are far from being shy when it comes to choosing their elected officials! They weren't afraid to vote for the candidate of their choice and they certainly didn't hesitate to "abstain" when they

needed it! Democracy! We had a REAL election and this is a fact we can ALL be proud of! No matter who "won or lost," the final analysis is our Society carried the day, hands down! Democracy in motion and power to the people!

Now We Can Get Back To Work...

At the Baltimore ANA, your new officers met and formulated quite a few exciting plans. Although much was accomplished, I would like to express all our feelings by saying to you, "Thanks for your vote of confidence, but we still need your ideas!" Since we have just sailed into this topic, I would now like to trumpet a call to arms! YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS GOOD PEOPLE TO RUN FOR NEXT YEAR'S ELECTION (1986-1987)!

PLEASE, if you would like to run for an office next year, contact us NOW so we can familiarize you with the job! Each officer has pledged to help ANYONE learn about how to handle his/her desired position and provide them with much needed advice. If you want to run for Editor of The Daily Planet, just drop our Secretary a line and I will provide you with all the necessary details. Feel like running for Vice President instead? No problem, our Assistant Emperor, Anthony Swiatek, will extend a helping hand. Do you have a burning desire to fill the presidency seat? Just say the word and our very own Imperial Wizard, Frank DuVall, will be more than happy to contact you! If you want to run for ANY office, don't wait for the last moment! Make your plans now!



The above represents the original issue box for the Louisiana Purchase gold dollars. This interesting picture was thoughtfully provided to us by WAYNE TAYLOR, member #572. It was my pleasure to meet Wayne at a Milwaukee show early this year and sign him up as a Society member. He operates his business under the name of Dollars And Sense, Inc. in Dearborn, MI and is an avid lover of Commemoratives. I not only thank him for adding to the spirit of our club, but also for his generosity in sending us this photograph!

***** Now It's Time For Club News! *****

Not that I wish to bang any pots or pans, but I strongly suggest you carefully peruse this latest edition of the CLUB NEWS DEPARTMENT! I have quite an interesting array of Society tidbits for you to devour, so you might want to pay careful attention to the menu at hand! I have some mouthwatering specials consisting of a hearty helping of LIFE MEMBERSHIPS, a filet of DELINQUENT DUES, a rack of NEW MEMBERS, a MISSING NUMBERS stew, and an entire literary buffet of other delectable treats. So if you have a real hunger to learn what's going on in this Society, I strongly suggest you read on! I'll even promise you won't faint when you get the bill! After all, you can sit in this restaurant for an ENTIRE YEAR for only \$12.50!

The Last Time I Saw Don Carmody He Was Loading A Shotgun...

Not that I'm one to spread ugly rumors, but something tells me I'd hate to be delinquent in paying my dues. At the recent Long Beach Convention, I wandered over to Don & Helen's table to say hello. Upon arriving on the scene, I noticed Don examining something underneath his table. Upon closer inspection, I realized he was absorbed in loading what appeared to be a very nasty looking sawed-off shotgun. As Don dropped the second shell into place I felt compelled to inquire if the gun was real!

He calmly replied, "Yup, and it's loaded up with Double-O Buck. This little baby will tear the front grill right off a Mack Truck at twenty feet." Don snapped the shotgun back together with a decisive click and offhandedly added, "By the way, did you see anyone around who hasn't paid their dues?" Never one to add to a scene, I just shook my head no. He said, "Oh well, I have to take a walk anyway."

About fifteen minutes later I was sitting at the table talking to Helen when I heard a big boom roll out of the parking lot. A few seconds later, Don strolled back carrying a bulky, rolled up copy of COIN WORLD. The issue must have been hot off the press as it was still smoking up a storm. However, I decided once again to keep my comments to myself.

Don paused long enough to ask, "Helen, did you say that delinquent dues payer drove a red or green Pinto?" She answered, "I said it was red, Don." He shook his head, chuckled, and replied, "Gee, we like the color green so much, I got mixed up again! That makes the third green Pinto today! Oh well, I still got another shell left. I'll be right back."

As I watched Don pace back towards the parking lot, I realized the moral to the story is PAY YOUR DUES! We still have some of you out there that haven't sent in your \$12.50 yet! Please send it in, we can ALWAYS use the money. Remember- no dues, no membership. No membership, no newsletter. No newsletter, no fun! Be kind to your Society, yourself, and your Pinto, send in your dues today! FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVEN'T PAID - THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER! Speaking of money...

Call To Glory Honor Roll...

You people really know how to respond to an honest plea for help! In the last issue, I asked for donations and started the ball rolling by kicking in a hundred bucks. As always, your collective reactions were just wonderful! Here's our call to glory honor roll...

\$100.00 or more: Michael J. Connor, John W. Hancock, Jr., James S. Iacovo, Herb Lawson, Ray Mercer.

\$75.00 to \$99.99: Gordon Paul Owens.

\$50.00 to \$74.99: Earl K. Johnson, Ralph C. Langham, Charles Reul, Jr., John H. Rogers, Mark Salzberg, John A. Wenta.

\$25.00 to \$49.99: Bob Ball, Dr. Robert E. Colby, John E. Dronzek, Charles D. Horning, Brad Karoleff, D. Chris Robertson, Philip Roth, Craig Watanabe.

\$1.00 to \$24.99: Bruce Altschuler, Tommy Acker, Louis B. & Harriet Goodsell, Curtis Fitzgerald, Charles J. Forno, Leo P. Frese, Donald A. Fryer, Jr., Jonathan Hefferlin, Richard J. Kolodziej, Dave H. Martin, R.J. Mayer, Walter A. Milani, Ed Mulhausen, Robert S. Pastorius, Charles J. Ricard, Edward D. Sims, Frank B. Smith, Brian D. Wake.

MATERIAL GOODS AND SERVICES: Jack Ehrmantraut - 1 Adult membership for someone

1980001) 19001, Charles L. Forno - three, circulated Columbian Halves for Juniors, Anthony Swiatek - three Cameo PL 1973-S Ike's for Juniors and Elgin Commemorative T-Shirts. ALL AWARDED AT LONG BEACH EXPO!

I would like to take this time to thank ALL these people for their kindness and caring! As I have stated in the past, regardless of the monetary amount, the thought behind each one of these donations adds up to \$1,000,000! If you would like to join the "Call To Glory" honor roll, simply send your check made out to the Society to: Helen Carmody - Secretary, P.O. 302, Huntington Beach, CA 92648.

FLASH! - Membership At All Time High - 740 And GROWING!...

Since our last newsletter, our membership has grown by just under 200 members! If that wasn't good enough, we now have a total of 23 Juniors! Holy mushroom! That's over a 30% increase in only three months! At this rate, we better start considering building our own convention center or a least buying a couple of jet planes for the officers! All kidding aside, this rapid growth is simply incredible! I would be willing to put a couple of Grants down on the table and say that we are currently the fastest growing numismatic club in America!

However, it is important to realize all this just doesn't happen by chance! Plenty of hard work goes into increasing the size of our organization and as our hotshot Publicity Chairmen, RALPH LANGHAM, says, "Each one of us has the potential of being good publicity for our Society!" By signing up even ONE member, YOU can make a difference! With our friendly members, aggressive newsletter, fun meetings, and the fact that we charge the most reasonable dues in America, it's easy to sign new people up! Speaking of signing people up, here's a list of our top recruiters who have performed a marvelous job since our last, July, 1985, newsletter report:

TEN or MORE: Helen & Don Carmody (38), Ray Mercer (19).

FIVE to NINE: Anthony Swiatek (9).

TWO to FOUR: Dick Armstrong (2), Chip Gambino (4), Tim Gabriel (2), Louis B. & Harriet Goodsell (2), James L. Halfon (3), Raymond L. Hastey (2), Steele Eunson/Wayne Hummel (3), James S. Iacovo (3), Ralph Langham (2), Ed Mulhausen (2), Diane Piret (2).

ONE MEMBER: Robert Arnel, Bob Ball, Thomas M. Best, Vince Blume, Ray Bolduc, Bill Brown, Willard L. Camp, Jr., Patricia E. Davis, Mike DeFalco, James M. DiGeorgia, Robert A. Driver, Dan Drykerman, Frank DuVall, Jack Ehrmantraut, Brian Griffin, Jonathan Hefferlin, Stephen W. Hyde, Jeffrey M. Issler, David M. Jones, Thomas Lindberg, Joseph Pankratz, Malcolm Porter, Thaddeus E. Smyth, Joseph M. Wesp, Randall R. White.

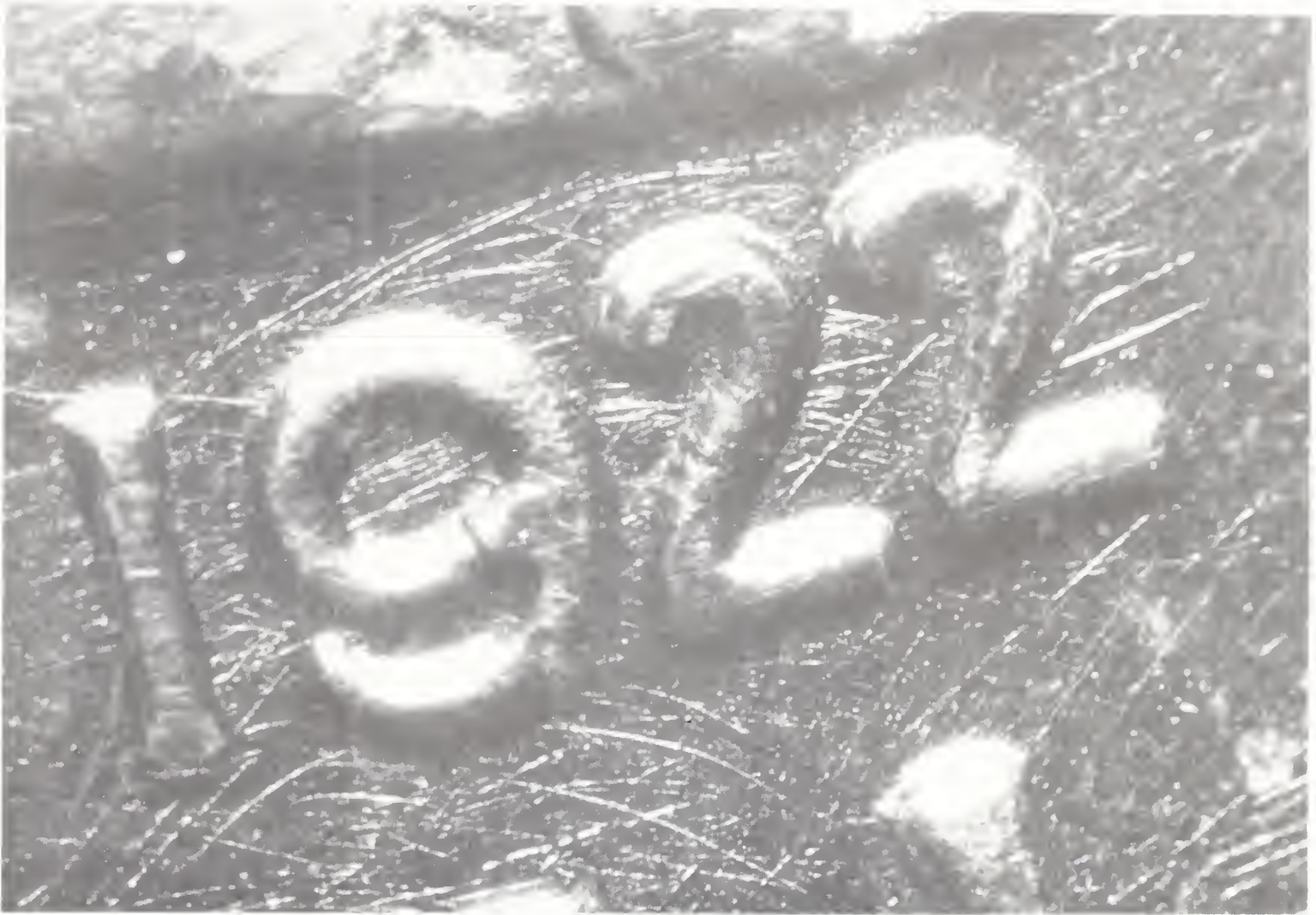
Also, a special thanks is due to DICK ARMSTRONG for including us in his commercial mailings!

Let's give these ACTIVE members a big hand! They performed an important task for their club and deserve a standing ovation! Why not join their ranks and sign up a member today? It's a good deed easily done! All you have to do is flash our newsletter and ask any "unattached" collector if he/she wants to join! I'll guarantee you they'll jump at the chance! If I have missed anyone, I'm truly sorry. Drop me a line and I will QUICKLY set the record straight!

Welcome Bobby Sloat, Member #676 and Paul L. Koppenhaver, Member #700!...

The SOCIETY FOR U.S. COMMEMORATIVE COINS has gone electronic! BOBBY SLOAT owner of ComNet teletype systems (Information Networks, Inc. of Westport, CT - the largest and fastest growing numismatic teletype service in the country with 490 dealers!) has joined our organization and has run messages urging dealers to jump on the Society's bandwagon!

PAUL L. KOPPENHAVER needs little introduction as he is Executive Director of the P.N.G. and enters our ranks as another illustrious member! Gentlemen, welcome aboard and thanks for your support!



Blow Up Of Die Polishing Marks On A Grant with Star. Please Note They're Raised!

Would YOU Like To Become A LIFE MEMBER Of Our Society?...

Okay, YOU asked for it! Since our organization's birth in August, 1983, we have been periodically bombarded with numerous requests for Life Memberships! At our Officer's Meeting during the Baltimore ANA the motion was introduced and finally agreed upon at the recent Long Beach Show. For your pleasure and enjoyment, here's the 4-Star final on ALL the details: IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A LIFE MEMBER...

1. You must have this year's dues (\$12.50 for 1985-1986) paid BEFORE you apply.
2. The current cost of Life Membership will be a ONE TIME fee of \$350.
3. Numbers will be drawn on a "lottery basis." We have made Life Membership #1 an honorary number for Frank DuVall for his work as our founding father. All other numbers, #2 through the amount of applications received BY DECEMBER 1st, 1985, will be issued on a "lottery basis."
4. The lottery will work as follows: ALL requests will be "thrown into a hat" and pulled by our charming Secretary, Helen (not a participant), during the next Society Meeting at the F.U.N. Show in January, 1986. As the names are pulled, the numbers will be issued as follows; the first name receives LM-#2, the second name LM-#3, and so on.
5. After the "lottery," all future Life Member numbers will be issued on a first come,

first serve basis.

6. Your check for \$350 MUST accompany your request and should be in the hands of our Secretary NO LATER THAN December 1st, 1985. This is important!!!!
7. Although, after the lottery, you will be immediately informed of your number, your Life Membership will begin in AUGUST of 1986 and you will be issued your Life Membership card at that time.
8. Anyone doing time in a City, State, or Federal "pen" need not apply.

Well, there you have it! If you're interested, you better act now! After much discussion, this is the most equitable way we could think of doing it. TO SAVE TIME, post your check and request to: Helen Carmody - Secretary, P.O. Box 302, Huntington Beach, CA 92648.

Gadzooks! We Have More Givers Than Takers!...

As it stands now, we have far more offers to pay for Junior Memberships than we have young numismatists WILLING to join our Society!! Obviously, we aren't complaining about your generosity! We just want you to know that if you desire to help increase our Junior Membership, instead of pledging to pay for their dues, YOU MIGHT WANT TO SIGN ONE UP INSTEAD! Our "Junior Boosters:" Bob Colby, Jack Ehrmantraut, Charles J. Forno, Mike Fuljenz, Ralph Langham, and Anthony Swiatek have plenty of Pesos hovering in the wings with not enough juniors swooping down on their offer! If you know of a WILLING young numismatist, PLEASE contact our Secretary!

Commemorative Society's Juniors Blow Out The Competition...

Junior members of our club had a virtual field day at this last ANA Convention! DAVID MASSEY (J-23, GA) won the Gould Memorial Literary Award with his topic, "The Eagle On U.S. Coinage." Not satisfied with this great honor, he also placed third with his exhibit of the same name in the U.S. Coins Category, the Gordon Green Memorial Award.

In the Foreign Coins Category, BARBARA STUTZMAN (J-11, PA) won third place with her exhibit entitled, "1971 - Cased Canadian Silver Dollars - 1985". Under Medals & Tokens, the Arlie Slabaugh Award, DOROTHY STUTZMAN (J-12, PA) took first place with her exhibit, "A Selection of Encased Cents." Sisters Barbara & Dorothy took 1st & 2nd place honors respectively in the Errors - Alan Herbert Award. Barbara's exhibit was "A Broken Die Progression Of The Current Year." Dorothy's was "A New Error Concept - Various Stages Of Unplated Zinc Cents." Barbara walked away with the Outstanding Young Numismatist, the most prestigious honor in the YN Program!

When you stop to think about it, ALL these awards are really impressive!!! These FELLOW SOCIETY MEMBERS are well deserving of our highest praise! Now that they have shown the ANA what we have suspected all along, I have some words of advice for them...

OKAY, HOTSHOTS!...

Isn't It About Time You Pulled A Rabbit Out Of A Hat In THIS Newsletter?...

After all, what are we here, chopped liver? Your eager Editor is simply doing handstands to get an article out of each of you! Holy repetition, although he seems to favor COIN WORLD lately, I can usually get articles out of people like Anthony Swiatek any old day! ON THE OTHER HAND, I'm dying to read a couple of pages from a group of hard working Junior authors like you!

In fact, as your Key Board Commander, I AM NOW ISSUING YOU and ALL the other Junior Members an OFFICIAL REQUEST for articles and/or Letters To The Editor! Before you ignore this directive from Star-Fleet Command, I STRONGLY SUGGEST, you reconsider your actions!

Although, unlike Don Carmody, I don't carry around a sawed-off shotgun, I don't think you would like to answer your doorbell and find a grumpy, 6'4" Editor asking for your letters/articles either! Be advised, and see you in the next issue of TCT!

COIN DEALER NEWSLETTER Ad Attracts New Members...

Our first experiment in the wonderful world of advertising has netted us to date a total of 42 new members! Not only did this advertisement rally new troops to the crusade, but it also spread the name of our Society across the entire expanse of this great nation of ours! It has helped to reinforce our organization's CREDIBILITY with the surrounding numismatic community and provides our membership with a symbol of pride! WE OWE A BIG THANKS TO: Ralph Langham (Publicity Chairperson) and Jan Mercer (Member #538) for their hard work on this project and to ALL our members who contributed a little extra money to fund this prestigious project! Another job well done to all!

Counterfeit Detection Department Needed...

In our last newsletter, I printed a letter from LAWRENCE KARP of Florida who asked for some tips about detecting counterfeits. Since your wish is my command, I contacted MIKE "FORMER ANACS" FULJENZ for some information and photographs. As always, Mike was more than happy to help out, but unfortunately, my mailbox is still empty! I realize Mike has a VERY BUSY schedule, so I thought I would take this opportunity to broadcast a general plea. In the event ANYONE can help us out in this department, PLEASE feel free to post any information along WITH photographs to Society HQ for our next issue!



Tab-Mark Toning

You often hear the term "tab-mark" toning and in case some of you are unfamiliar with its visual nature, here's a good example! The outline you see is the result of the coin resting inside the slot of its original issue holder. The center toning "stain" is from a hole in the slot! However, please bear in mind not ALL "tab-mark" specimens have this "stain" as all of the slots didn't have holes! Another courtesy via BILL FIVAZ!

TERESA DARLING and SAMUEL L. LOPRESTO wallop another one out of the park...

I happily attended the most recent LONG BEACH NUMISMATIC & PHILATELIC EXPO, INC. and as usual, found it to be an outstanding show! However, I was truly amazed at the EXCEPTIONAL kindness and help given to our Society by TERESA DARLING and SAMUEL L. LOPRESTO! Not only did Teresa & Sam feature our Club's Meeting in their heavy advertising campaign, but extended EVERY additional effort to insure our success at this

fabulous event!

Once again, on BEHALF OF OUR ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP, I would like to thank them for their helping hand and I STRONGLY URGE all our members to support their future LONG BEACH EXPO'S with the SAME ENERGY and COURTESY they show towards our club! Let's prove we can be good friends to two people who really deserve our thanks!

Letters To The Editor Can Make A Difference - More On Society Seminars...

In our last newsletter, BOB COLBY penned a thoughtful note and inquired about Society sponsored seminars. His motion stirred your officers into action and we requested your feelings on this timely project. To date, we have received TWENTY-FIVE replies from members stating that they would be willing to entertain paying \$250 - \$350 to attend a Society Seminar, so now we would like you to firm up some details!

First of all, we would like to know your thoughts on a good geographical location. Please let us know if we should go with the East Coast, West Coast, Central United States, or Guam Island? What time of year would be good for you? What topics would you like discussed? Needless to say, we can't promise tailor made seminars to fit everyone's TOTAL desires, but we are now starting to enter THE PLANNING STAGE and your input is sorely needed. PLEASE, we would like to hear from EVERYONE of you who are interested in this project and learn your ANSWERS to these questions!

It's All In The Numbers...

Although we have had a big increase in the amount of people now using their membership numbers when writing to the Society, Helen Carmody has reminded me that there are still some of us (your editor included!) who tend to forget. Please help us out with this little project and display your membership number with pride! Why not try making it a habit? Write it on everything you send out, including notes to the phone company, IRS, credit card bills, and if applicable, even your parole officer. After all, practice makes perfect!

Congratulations To Our New ANA Board Member, Bill Fivaz!...

Well, one of the Society's three torpedoes rang metal with the recent election of BILL FIVAZ, member #466, to the ANA's Board Of Governors. I'm sure you're all with me in extending a big tip-of-the-hat to a great guy whose has more than earned this important position! And while we're on the subject...

To ALL Of You Who Ran In The Society's Last Election...

Thanks for taking the time to run and for your kind interest in our organization! As with ANY club, we're only as good as our members and you have proved we have a solid foundation! It was a fun election and a shame everybody couldn't walk away with a position. However, don't let losing a seat stop you! THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL is ALWAYS HERE to aid you in your SINCERE QUEST to help our Society. Please don't disappear, we are awaiting your insights with bated breath!

A Call To Arms Answered....

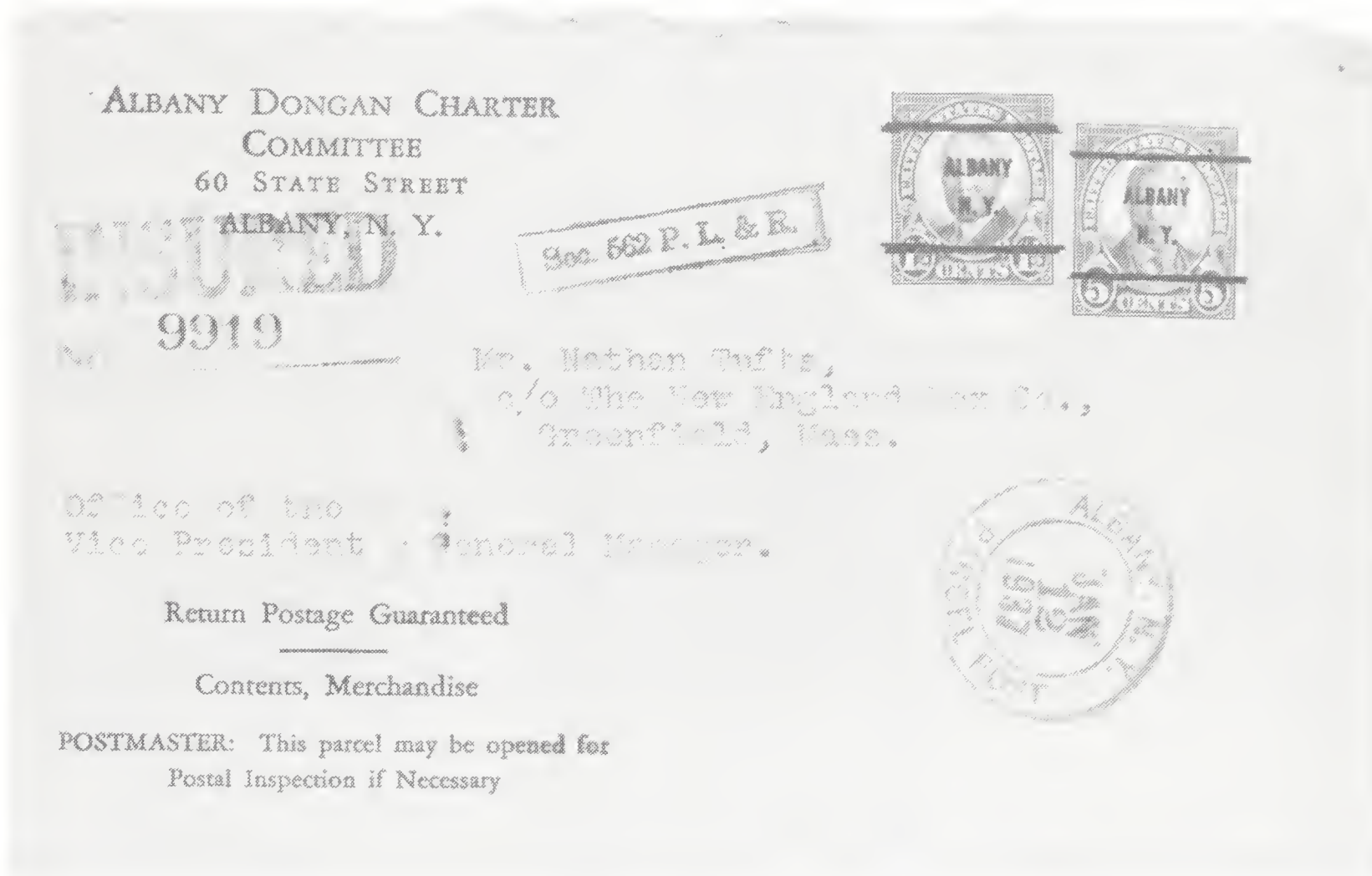
In the last issue of THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL, I requested that you send in your dues before Helen & Don dropped from exhaustion! To the hundreds of members who quickly responded by sending in their \$12.50 ahead of schedule, your Editor salutes your thoughtfulness! Your actions show that not only are you concerned members of our Society, but also sensitive members of another important organization to which we all belong, the human race! Thanks people, it was a nice touch on your part!

Want To See My Etchings?....

In an effort to promote Commemoratives and aid the Society, BILL SHAMHART (Member #33, MO) conceived the following idea: He enlisted the talents of his friend, artist Peter Hackett, to create two etchings (limited edition of 20!). These fanciful works of art show the obverse and reverse of the Oregon Trail on one and the California Jubilee on the other! The etchings were offered in San Diego and Long Beach, and only TWO (2) sets remain unsold at the time of publication! The price per set is \$190, and \$50 OF THAT AMOUNT is DONATED to the Society's treasury!

Your Editor has not only seen these charming works of art, but was so taken back by their SIGNIFICANCE and beauty that I quickly decided to purchase a set for myself! Although Helen has thoughtfully provided me with a long list of accomplishments by the artist, with ONLY TWO SETS REMAINING, I see no point in taking up the space! It's obvious this man is good (Paris American Academy of Fine Arts) by viewing his work!

My advice to you is to "take a shot" and order a set. Not only are they fun to look at (the whole idea!), but with only 20 pieces in existence, how can you go wrong? They measure 6"x8.75" and 7.74"x10.25" inches image size. These are unframed. Of course, framed and properly matted, including the artist's signature, the entire presentation will be considerably bigger. Contact Helen Carmody for details.



The above represents the original mailing envelope for the Albany Commemorative. As you can see, six and a half cents went a long way in those days - all the way from Albany, NY to Greenfield, MA! (Courtesy of your Editor)

*** Letters To The Editor ***

Believe it or not, although I received a healthy load of great articles during the past quarter, my Society mailbag isn't bursting at the seams with its usual accumulation of Letters To The Editor! Holy amnesia! Has everyone forgotten their kindly, old Editor? Even my favorite pen-pal, LARRY KARP, must have been busy these last couple of months as I can't find a letter from him no matter how hard I try! When one of Larry's letters isn't around to brighten my day, I know I'm in trouble! Gee whiz, people! Don't be so shy! Why not knock a letter off to old fur-face today?

however, this is not to overlook the multitude of friendly notes passed onto me by Helen & Don! We All appreciate you taking the time to tell us how much you enjoy your membership AND newsletter as it makes all our work worthwhile!

Before we get into our first correspondence, let me just remind you that this Department is your SOUNDING BOARD! If something is on your mind, write your thoughts down and post it along! I really enjoy hearing from you and will do my best to follow up on EACH AND EVERY letter! Now for our first set of insights...

Keep Signing Those Members Up!...

I have recently joined the Society while attending the Long Beach Show. Since I am a dealer in high quality (MS-65 & better) commemoratives, I feel that any education or information provided to collectors on the finer points of grading or just providing essential information is utmost. I feel THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL does this, and is by far and away one of the more informative publications circulating in the rare coin field.

Since I very strongly believe in the Society, I am asking you to send me 10 to 15 applications. I feel as many people should know about the Society as possible! And I'm going to do my best to select new members!

Tim Gabriel, Member #556, PA.

Editor's Reply...

Thanks for your praise and eager support! For those of you who are unfamiliar with Tim, he is the President of Gabriel Investments out of Pittsburgh. His letter should remind us all that additional membership application forms are always available by writing to Society HQ and that we are more than happy to send them along to any eager parties! Tim's success in signing up new members has already been reflected under Club News, so why don't you follow his lead and recruit a new member today? Now here's a member with an interesting idea...

How Many 1935/34 Boone Sets Are Out There Anyway?...

I own a complete BU set of the silver U.S. Commemorative Coins grading from MS-60 to MS-65, depending on who grades them, of course. (Editor's note: that usually depends on if you're buying or selling!) By a complete set I mean the 144 different types, dates, and mint marks issued between 1892 and 1954. As we all know, some of these coins are of extremely low mintages. For example, some of the Daniel Boone issues are only around 2,000 minted.

I have often wondered how many complete sets of the BU silver U.S. Commemoratives Coins are in existence. Considering coins which have been lost, circulated, and damaged I should think the number would be far less than 2,000.

If anyone has an idea of how many complete sets exist, I would appreciate being advised. It would be interesting to take a poll of the members of our Society to determine how many members own complete sets of BU coins.

Frank Walker, Member #295, MO.

Editor's Reply

Frank, thanks for taking the time to write and let me say that you've got a great idea there! In fact, I would like EVERY member who has a complete 144 piece set to drop us a quick note and clue us in on its existence. Just for fun, I'm even going to take Frank's concept one step further and also ask members who own a 1935/sm.34 Boone Set (total available sets - 2,003) to drop us a line too! My reason for this is simple. Although I

don't own a complete set of Commemoratives, I do own three, 1935/sm.34 Boone Set and I would like to get in on the fun!

I'll let you know what's floating around in the Society in our next issue, so drop Helen Carmody a note today! In the case of the 1935/sm.34 Boone set, I'm almost willing to bet we collectively own close to 25% of the ENTIRE mintage! After all, Frank Walker and Ray Mercer already have 2% of the mintage under control! Talking about keeping things under control, here's a very welcome note...

Let's All Do What We Can...

To All Fellow Society Members:

Let us not allow only our Officers to be the gentlemen that support the Society with large contributions to help defray the running of our club. Let us show some appreciation for the wonderful job that is being done by sending in some contributions. Let us all do with one less movie, or one less dinner, or one less show a year, and send the few dollars to our Society.

We all have the unique opportunity of possibly making the Commemorative Society one of the strongest and perhaps most influential societies in the history of numismatics. A strong society based on honesty and good will makes all of us richer, wiser, and better people. A sound financial society will be a step forward for all of us to achieve the important goals we all seek. If you can, please send in some money. Enclosed is my small contribution.

Let those of us who can afford it all send in double dues this year to sponsor some deserving Juniors that may not have the money and who want to participate in our club.

Dr. Bob Colby, Member #94, NY.

Editor's Reply...

Bob, thanks for your strong and sincere message! Although I agree with your feelings 100%, I would just like everyone to realize that donations are STRICTLY up to the individual. We appreciate ANY and ALL donations regardless of the amount! No matter if it's a \$1 or \$100, it's really the thought that counts. I know that sounds corny, but I would only like to encourage people to give who can really afford it. If you have extra money to spend, fine, but if you don't, we're still PROUD to have you as a member!

Just another reminder in the case of Junior memberships! Currently, as I related under Club News, there aren't enough young numismatists to go around! In order to pay for additional Junior memberships, we now have to find some more youngsters who want to join! If you know of any, please drop us a line! As you can see, there are plenty of members willing to help!

However, this reminder is not to take away from Bob's touching letter or his generous donation! He certainly hit the nail on the head when he implies that the more money we have, the more we can do! I would also like to remind Bob that it isn't only our officers who contribute extra money to the cause. If you review our "Call To Glory" honor roll, I think you'll see my point! Now for some more good news...

Seminars Are A Great Idea!...

I'm writing to express my opinion on a Society-sponsored seminar as mentioned in the July issue of THE COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL. I think this would be a great idea and would be well worth a price of \$250-\$350 for two days. My preferences for topics to be covered in such a seminar include grading, die characteristics, original toning, and counterfeit detection. I'd very much enjoy attending a Society seminar and meeting other members.

Hopefully enough members will respond to make it possible.

I've also included a check for my 8/85 through 8/86 membership dues. I hope it gets to you in time to save you the trouble of mailing me a dues request. Keep up the good work. we appreciate it.

Greg Buchenroth, member #472, OH.

Editor's Reply...

Greg, thanks for paying your dues ahead of schedule and your kind comments! I hope your letter motivates other members who are interested in seminars to drop Helen & Don a line! If you have anymore thoughts on this subject, follow the instructions under CLUB NEWS!



STONE MOUNTAIN HALF DOLLAR... Seeing Double?...

One of the FUN aspects of collecting is uncovering different varieties on coins that are relatively unknown, or, in some cases, totally new to the numismatic fraternity.

Although both the doubled die obverse and the doubled die reverse have been known for a few years on the Stone Mountain Commemorative (2 different coins), I'd wager a VF BTW that only a handful of the members of this fine organization are aware that these varieties exist.

To be sure, they're not the "golly-gee-whiz" type of die doubling that sends you to friendly Pearle Vision Center when first viewing the coin, but the doubling IS quite noticeable, especially on the obverse variety.

Die doubling occurs when a die, which is hard steel, is reimpresed by either a different hub (which may be slightly out of register from the one originally used), or the same hub that has been turned or shifted slightly at the time of the second impression. There are several ways doubling can occur, but the very basic explanation above will avoid much confusion and is sufficient for this explanation. The important thing to remember is that being hard steel, a die must be impressed by the hub at least twice, being annealed or heated between hubbings, in order to obtain the desired clarity.

Also, die doubling is characterized by the secondary image being RAISED AND ROUNDED, not flat, shelf-like and close to the field of the coin, which is "mechanical", "machine" or "strike" doubling, and of little or no value.

Neither of these varieties is particularly rare-and probably not even scarce, but they are interesting, and illustrate what you can find when you really look at your coins.

Let's see how many Doubled Dies, RPM's (Repunched Mintmarks), and RPD's (Repunched Dates) you can come up with on your commems! Put some more FUN in your collecting!

Bill Fivaz, Member #466, GA.

Editor's Reply...

Bill, a double set of thanks to you for posting us this additional pair of photographs! Now I know how you won the ANA Board Seat, everyone must have voted for you twice! This just goes to prove we all have something to share! Potential contributors take note!! Now here's another timely and important explanation from Helen & Don Carmody...

Dear Fellow Members of the Society...

We really dislike taking up valuable space in the newsletter to write this letter, but we feel we've received sufficient inquiries to warrant our doing so. Quite a few of you have written to us, asking why dues are payable now (in September) when you last paid your dues less than a year ago.

As most of you know, our organization was founded at the 1983 ANA Convention in San Diego. When you joined the Society, you received a copy of the bylaws. If you will note ARTICLE IV, DUES, Section 1, it reads as follows:

"The regular membership dues shall be \$12.50 annually, due and payable at the annual meeting at the annual ANA Convention. Life member(s) (non-honorary) shall pay a one-time fee of _____. Members admitted at any time other than the annual ANA Convention will pay full value for membership which will require renewal at the next annual ANA Convention. Junior member dues are \$5.00 annually."

Further, if you check your membership cards for each year, you will see that they state at the bottom, "Expires August 198_."

draws near, a seed that was planted in our computer almost a year ago begins to blossom. This seed grows into a never ending vine sprouting a hardy crop of renewal notices. Sure you get multiple chances to renew with a commercial publication, but for \$50 or \$60 a year, why not? All I'm trying to say is let's keep Helen & Don Carmody's work a labor of love for a HOBBY, not a pain-in-the-neck grind for a BUSINESS. I'm sorry if I came on strong over this one, but as Gary Cooper said at high noon one day, "A man's gotta do, what a man's gotta do."

*** The Presidential Department ***

by Frank DuVall, Member #1, AL

Your recent vote of confidence for me as your president is greatly appreciated. It is a pleasure to serve in our society of many talented, dedicated, and enthusiastic members. As an added bonus, the other officers constitute a group of hard-working people who have proven their worth by past actions. I look forward to a highly successful year because of you, the officers and members.

We have come far since our first meeting in August '83. We can all be pleased in our progress toward our stated objectives. Certainly, much has been done to elevate commems to their rightful place in numismatics; remove the aura of confusion that surrounded commems; educate the numismatic fraternity on commems; and promote love of the beauty and rarity of commems. We, collectively, will continue to pursue these objectives until we can devote most of our time to "promote love of the beauty and rarity of commems".

As my first official duty, it was a pleasure to present a plaque of appreciation to Anthony Swiatek, who has so ably served as president for the first two years of our society. Fortunately, Anthony continues to serve this year as vice president. If you have the opportunity, stop by to express your appreciation to Anthony-he has truly earned it.

In a discussion with Dennis Brown (Member #87) of Florida, he volunteered to spearhead an effort to establish a condition census listing of commems. This is an exciting task in which your president has done some ground work in the past two years. As we mentioned in earlier writings, it may be difficult to do with the more common issues, (Iowa, Roanoke, Albany, Boone, Oregon, Norfolk, etc.) while it appears possible to establish a moving ranking of Lafayette, Isabella, Missouri, Cincinnati, Hawaiian, Pan Pac, Sesqui half dollar and the gold commems. We have the wide options of considering condition census in an overall condition as well as specific and individual conditions such as luster, or strike, or absence of marks, or color, or overall eye appeal, or uniqueness such as proofs or presentation pieces or varieties.

Your officers have planned many meetings and presentations on commems at major shows this year (August to August). Plan to attend as many of these as you can. I certainly look forward to meeting with as many of you as I can this year.

I have been giving some thought to the desirability of building MS-63+ commem sets. Only a limited number of sets can be built (we know not over 10,000 silver or 5,000 gold sets), and a MS-63+ set would be very beautiful. It is inevitable that these MS-63+ sets will become heirlooms in the future.

An Editor's Thoughts On The Finer Things In Life...

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome Frank to these pages as our new President and as far as this member is concerned, we couldn't have picked a better man for the job! As a matter of fact, just like I did for Bill Fivaz, I even voted for him twice!

The reason why I am breaking tradition by commenting upon Frank's excellent message is I

There is no question upon a subject of extreme importance to us all. PLEASE carefully consider the mention of your Society possibly taking on the role of endorsing and/or establishing a "condition census listing" for U.S. Commemoratives as this is a very serious move on the part of our organization! Although he has mentioned this concept to me in the past, I really didn't get a chance to chat with him about it in detail until this last Long Beach Show. To be truthful, there are many things about it that greatly disturbs me.

I would now like to share the feelings I have on this subject with you, the ENTIRE membership. After all, we were created as a common group and this newsletter's purpose is to reach out to ALL our members with an honest exchange of ideas. So with this in mind, I would like you to take a hard look at this timely topic BEFORE we commit ourselves to any future actions.

To be candid, by attempting to establish a "condition census" (i.e. "The Finest Known To Us") of U.S. Commemoratives I think we are only kidding ourselves. However, if I believed this was the only folly contained in this project, I wouldn't have bothered to "rock the boat" by writing this article. After all, we are all entitled to our hopes and dreams. I realize this proposal has been formulated out of love of the hobby and spawned by a genuine interest in solving its mysteries. Unfortunately, I think this "condition census" has the potential of damaging our Society far more than helping it. To easily explain my position, here is a list of drawbacks I can quickly foresee:

1. DO WE REALLY WANT TO CREATE ANOTHER "FINEST KNOWN SYNDROME?" All we have to do is turn on our television sets and we are immediately bombarded by commercial claims of the biggest, best, sexiest, fastest, strongest, and almost every other kind of ear catching "-est" the media can throw our way. Although it certainly helps to move cans of soda off the shelves, do we really want to introduce this "mine's bigger, faster, stronger than yours" concept to the HOBBY of collecting Commemoratives AND our Society? Isn't merely saying, "This is a VERY BEAUTIFUL coin," good enough for us anymore?"

EVERYONE likes to fantasize about the beauty of their coins. It's part of the FUN of collecting. Do YOU want to be the one to say, "I'm sorry, your coin is only MS-65+?" What do you mean, ONLY MS-65+? Are we crazy or what? First it was MS-65, and now MS-65+ & MS-67 labels aren't GOOD ENOUGH anymore? "More praise, more praise, I'm still not satisfied!" Is that it?

2. YES, THERE IS A SCHOLARLY ASPECT TO APPOINTING A COIN TO THE "FINEST KNOWN TO US" POSITION, BUT WHO'S GOING TO DO IT? For example, who's "us?" First of all, regardless of the amount of knowledge that can be truthfully attributed to any one person, it's still not enough for that person to be morally justified in saying, "This Hawaiian is the FINEST KNOWN." Okay, you might answer me by saying, "Let's put together a panel of experts," but this leads us to another problem...
3. THE SELECTION PROBLEM. Four "specialists" (okay, experts, if you want to get picky with your terminology) look at the Hawaiian in question. Three feel the coin is the "Finest Known," (as far as this week is concerned anyway) and one doesn't. Is the coin now considered the "Finest Known?" Should the vote be unanimous? Now let's take it one step further and assume ALL FOUR mortals agree, would you still feel 100% safe calling it the FINEST KNOWN? Remember, we aren't talking about whether this Hawaiian is MS-67 or not! We are talking about THE FINEST KNOWN! Think of the possible repercussions! Perhaps you can now see my next point...
4. NO ONE PERSON OR REASONABLE ACCUMULATION THERE OF, HAS THE MORAL RIGHT OR ADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE TO MAKE THIS TYPE OF BINDING JUDGEMENT IN THE NAME OF OUR SOCIETY. The fact is, regardless of our good or scholarly intentions, the Society's label of "FINEST KNOWN" is somewhere down the line going to cost some collector/investor BIG DOLLS and I don't think any of us want to be directly responsible for that, even if



Raised, Gold Seal

STATE OF IOWA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Blue Ink

ROBERT D BLUE
GOVERNOR

DES MOINES

January 4, 1949

Mr. John M. Grimes
State Treasurer
B U I L D I N G

Dear Mr. Grimes:

In accordance with the action of the Iowa Centennial Committee, I have the pleasure of enclosing herewith an Iowa Centennial Coin.

Both the Committee and myself are deeply appreciative of the assistance which you gave which made the distribution of the Iowa Centennial Half Dollar outstanding in the history of memorial coins.

Blue
Ink

Please accept my thanks and the appreciation of the Centennial Committee for the part that you played in making this program an outstanding success.

Very truly yours,

Robert D Blue
Governor

Black
Pen

RDB/m

This letter was furnished to us by Anthony Swiatek. He advises, "Coin presented is a certain, strong, early strike. The fields are shiny looking and possess that aluminum look, similar to the early struck Cleveland Halves (1 - 200)."

we should own the coin! I'm not talking about paying \$25,000 for a Hawaiian because of its exceptional beauty! If someone is willing to pay that for a wonderful example, God bless them.

what I am talking about is the collector/investor who is willing to pay \$25,000 for that coin ONLY because YOU, the Society For U.S. Commemorative Coins, a respected organization, has seen fit to label it as the "Finest Known!" No matter how hard we try to prevent this problem, it's going to happen! Go to ANY major show and you will rapidly discover how many people get bonked over the head practicing this concept. The only difference will be that YOU, as a member of this organization, will have to accept some of the responsibility. Which leads us to...

5. WHAT HAPPENS, TWO WEEKS LATER, WHEN A COIN IS NO LONGER CONSIDERED THE FINEST KNOWN? Remember, we are RESPONSIBLE for someone laying out \$25,000 for that "Finest Known" Hawaiian and now another example comes along with one less tiny nick, or just a baby's breath more die definition, and/or just the slightest hint more color. What do we tell him now, "Sorry, but you still have a real nice coin for your money? Don't worry about the 25-G's, it's only a hobby?" Tell me...
6. HAVE YOU SEEN 1,000 OUT OF A POSSIBLE 9,958 HAWAIIANS LATELY? Forgetting about the ones you've missed and assuming you have seen a 1,000 DIFFERENT specimens in all grades, can you really remember if that nifty piece you saw seven years ago looks better than the one you are looking at now? Could you do that without being able to compare the two? How about compared to specimen you saw just a "short" month ago? I'm sure you see my point. Now multiply this confusion times four panelists and I really think you will understand my doubts! By the way...
7. DO WE REALLY WANT TO BE ANOTHER ANACS? As soon as we announce this "condition census" to the outside world, what do you think is going to happen? Do you think EVERY person submitting coins is going to be as nice as a Frank DuVall or Dennis Brown? After all, we just can't do it for a handful of people, it wouldn't be fair OR accurate. Do you think EVERY PERSON is going to be a sincere numismatist who is seeking to improve our overall "understanding of this series?"

Besides the coins of sincere numismatists, we're going to attract hustlers, B.S. artists, and commercial hype-matists from 5,000 square miles around! An endless stream of SAFE-T-MAILERS containing artificially toned Gems, dipped-out Wonder-Coins, wishful proofs, and God knows what else type of overpriced junk are going to come flying in on jet planes with dollar signs emblazoned on their wings waiting for our "experts" to make that fatal mistake! Truthfully, who needs it? I, for one, don't want to play this game. Do YOU? Which reminds me...

8. BESIDES HANDLING THE LOGISTICS, HOW DO WE PAY FOR ALL THIS? Where, when, and how do we perform this serious task? How do we get our "experts" all together? Then add postage, mailing, insurance, and a multitude of other costs! Do we charge a fee for telling people their coin isn't the "finest known?" Which brings up another interesting point...
9. WHY ISN'T MY HAWAIIAN THE FINEST KNOWN? After we sour a collector's sweet dreams, I think he is entitled to ask that question, don't you? He has a right to know why he has been denied entry into our self-appointed Hall of Fame! Would YOU like to be the one to say, "I'm sorry, sir, but your purple Hawaiian isn't the finest known specimen because somebody ran up a \$1,400 electric bill cooking it in a microwave oven?" Yes, we could play cute like ANACS and NOT OFFER an explanation, but this would be a cop-out too! Remember, if we want to play God, we must be willing to perform all of our miracles in the DAYLIGHT! Which brings us to...
10. WHAT REAL GOOD DOES THIS DO OUR AVERAGE MEMBER? Of course, we ALL LOVE seeing beautiful coins, but are they really going to be any prettier because three or four

people think they're the "finest known?" Let's be honest with ourselves. We are a Society for ALL, not just for "star-fleet commanders" and their pet rocket ships. Is an enthusiastic collector going to be so eager to show his pride & joy, an MS-63 Hawaiian (the flagship of his fleet!), if the FINEST KNOWN is buzzing around the meeting room?

We all know human nature. It's going to make the average collector back off. He's going to say to himself, "Nobody's going to be interested in my piece," or "I hope they don't compare it to The Finest Known!" How about our young numismatists? Where's the kick in owning an XF Pilgrim in this type of environment? How many lawns are they going to want to cut for that?

Now my dissertation leads us directly to YOU, the reader and member of our club. Before coming to this newsletter with these thoughts, I expressed my feelings to Helen & Don Carmody, Anthony Swiatek, and Ralph Langham. Although we all agree on the potential dangers to our Society, we also realize your officers' opinions are not enough. If we truly want to be a Society for ALL, we must solicit your ideas on this important subject! If you accept our views and concern, don't just nod your head and move on to the next page! As Editor, I NEED YOUR HELP WITH THIS! Please take the time to drop me a note via the Secretary (P.O. Box 302, Huntington Beach, CA 92648) and give us your vote of confidence! You voted us into office, now give us the strength to do our job! Regardless how "high" or "low" your membership number is, never forget your opinion carries its own weight. Remember, if you don't care about the consequences, maybe we shouldn't care either!

As much as I can see the initial fun involved and the "educational" asset of our Society endorsing or establishing a "condition census" for Commemoratives, I really think it would ultimately do far more harm than good. Obviously, any critics will say that I don't want you to face reality, but then again, what is reality? I respectfully ask you tell me. Please write me a note today. Pro or con, it doesn't matter as long as you let your feelings be known. I really care about what you have to say. That's why I took this job.



Anthony, Thanks For Giving Us Your Best For Two Terms!

Helen presents our parting Pres. with a plaque of appreciation at the ANA show.

*** From The Office Of The V.P. ***

by Anthony Swiatek, Member #4, NY

To ALL who voted for me in our past election, "An MS-70 thank you!" I would also like to thank Helen & Don Carmody and Ray Mercer for their excellent work.

My goals as Vice President are:

1. The achievement of Society membership to reach 1,000 by August, 1986.
2. The encouragement of juniors in numismatics. In line with this goal, I recently presented a very successful Junior program at the Long Beach Convention with 152 parents and children in attendance!
3. To promote the Commemorative Series via more articles and lectures.
4. To assist ANY and ALL members in their legitimate quest for knowledge.

Numismatically, Anthony Swiatek.

P.S. As far as I am concerned, the ONLY satin finish proof that exists is the Robinson-Arkansas. Occasionally, people will offer coins that are well struck, grade MS-65+, and have been angelically protected as "satin finish proofs." These coins are not proof, but usually some form of "presentation piece" or just extremely well preserved. A true satin proof must be double struck! Lately, some people are content to label anything that looks halfway decent as a satin finish proof, so pay strict attention to what you are buying!

*** The Publicity Board Room ***

by Ralph Langham, Member #49, CT.

From everyone's point of view and especially the Commemorative Society, the A.N.A.'s Baltimore convention was a success. The annual meeting was filled to the point of overflow so much that COIN WORLD could not get there until after the meeting was over and NUMISMATIC NEWS had trouble finding the meeting hall. All kidding aside, we had a great meeting and played to "a standing room only house!" This meeting revealed itself to be a tremendous success for some "on the spot" publicity and all the comments we later heard on the bourse floor were highly favorable.

As already reported, the CDN ad increased our membership by almost 10% and certainly succeeded in making the numismatic public aware of our existence. Please use the insert in this issue to sign up at least one, new member.

Dr. Lyndon King (Member #84) has graciously offered to pay for four ads in a numismatic periodical and we are now trying to come up with timely ads to take advantage of his offer. Both Anthony Swiatek and your publicity chairman have prepaid the dues for ten new junior members each. Part of the ads will reflect this. We will also try to get some free publicity on this as I am unaware of any other national numismatic society that is placing such an emphasis on junior members.

In the way of regional meetings, I will be teaming up with Ray Mercer to hold a Regional meeting at the Hartford NENA convention at 9:00 A.M. on November 2nd, 1985. Regional meetings may be held if two or more officers are available at any major convention and can get the promoters of the convention to give us adequate meeting facilities. These are excellent publicity vehicles and I highly recommend that ANYONE contact us and see if we can get a regional meeting for you. We are, after all, our best publicity!

A number of us have discussed ways in which we could get more juniors involved in collecting and in particular, in Commemoratives. One of which would be to sponsor a contest in which the junior member signing up the most members or writing the best essay would win a prize of an uncirculated Commemorative, a cash prize or? There are question marks here and there and I would love to hear from the membership on this idea, especially the juniors themselves.

Also I would love to hear from the other individuals who ran for the publicity office as you have good ideas and perhaps we could all work together for the advancement of our society. Please contact me via Society H.Q.!

*** The Program Card ***

by Gene Neel, Member #32, MN.

First, allow me to say that it is indeed a pleasure to be your new Program Chairperson and I would like to thank all of you for your valued support. With the help of our other officers, I hope to expand the number and quality of our meetings.

Getting right down to business, I would like to briefly inform you of what has transpired in the way of Society meetings since I took office:

BALTIMORE, MD, ANA, AUGUST. This year's annual meeting proved to be one of our best yet! We filled the meeting room to "standing room only" and our new officers accepted their positions in front of an enthusiastic crowd. Our Editor, Ray Mercer (Member #20), presented an excellent slide show on the numerous grading characteristics of different commemoratives and met with rave reviews. We honored Anthony Swiatek with a plaque and turned his office over to Frank DuVall.

MILWAUKEE SHOW, WI, SEPTEMBER. This was our first meeting at this club show and although it was sparsely attended, we now have a base to work from. I am going to ask our Publicity Chairperson to work with the local club representative to help increase awareness of this event. JIM IACOVO (Member #5, CT) gave a very informative talk on grading commemoratives.

LONG BEACH EXPO, CA, OCTOBER. A very impressive meeting! Great attendance, educational, and plenty of fun! Ray Mercer gave a great talk, "How To Look At A Coin" and backed up his excellent program with some very informative slides.

Schedule Of Future Meetings

NENA, HARTFORD, CT, NOVEMBER 2ND, 1985, 9:00AM, Speakers - Jim Iacovo, Ralph Langham, & Ray Mercer.

*ANNUAL PEACH STATE COIN SHOW, ATLANTA, GA, NOVEMBER 8th - 10th, 1985.

F.U.N. CONVENTION, TAMPA, FL (my home state!), JANUARY, 1986. Speaker - Anthony Swiatek.

LONG BEACH EXPO, CA, FEBRUARY, 1986. Speaker - Ray Mercer

MID-WINTER ANA, SALT LAKE CITY, UT, FEBRUARY, 1986. Speaker - Ray Mercer.

CENTRAL STATES, Location and Time to be given in the next newsletter. Speaker - Frank DuVall.

LONG BEACH EXPO, CA, JUNE, 1986, Speaker(s) - to be decided.

MILWAUKEE ANA, WI, AUGUST, 1986, Speaker(s) - to be decided.

CONFIDENTIAL, CA, OCTOBER, 1986, Speaker(s) - to be decided.

As of press time, we are still attempting to firm up a meeting at this show. Although I'm confident we will have a meeting (probably Saturday morning). I would like all of you in the Atlanta area to be aware of its pending schedule. (Editor's note: Since Gene Neel and I have Ralph Langham and the charming Sonya Hayes wedding to attend on Nov. 17th, we are trying to arrange our schedules accordingly!)

I would also like you to understand that this is only a PARTIAL listing. I am still working with the other officers in planning MORE meetings at quite a few ADDITIONAL shows! For my term as Program Chairperson, I hope to help put together at least a total of 15 - 20 programs!

I am Eager To Help You Put A Meeting Together In Your Area...

At a recent local CT show, Ralph Langham was approached by a member from the New Haven, CT area who said, "I've been a member of the Commemorative Society for almost two years and we NEVER have a meeting I can attend. They're always in California!"

Either this gentleman doesn't read his newsletter (Editor's note: Maybe he has us confused with the California State Numismatic Association as I mentioned them in our last COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL!), or he doesn't believe in writing to his Society for help. Ralph asked him if he had ever written Society Headquarters with his problem and the man said, "No, I didn't think it would do any good."

Well, I suggest we all look to the top of the Scheduled Events List to see what can happen if you will just take the time to ask for our help. Hartford is a short drive from New Haven and now that member can feel good as his suggestion has helped EVERYBODY out in the area! I can't always promise you I can get the job done (Editor's note: We need at least two officers in attendance), but I can promise you I will try my best to target a meeting near you.

I Welcome ALL Speakers...

Although I am very proud and pleased with our scheduled speakers, I really feel we should be hearing from more of you, collectors especially. If you would like to give a small talk (5 or 10 minutes) all the way up to a lecture (30 minutes or more), PLEASE contact me via Society Headquarters. We are all friends in this club, so don't be shy! (Editor's note: I'll drink to that! If I can rant & rave for an hour and not get pelted with empty pop bottles, it ought to be a breeze for a normal person!)

In closing, let me say that we have an exciting year lined up and I look forward to seeing all of you at a meeting at some time during my term. Your suggestions are always welcome.

Articles From The Membership!

We have some great articles to enjoy in this issue, so without any further ramblings, here's our first one:

*** A March Through History ***

by Joe Wesp, Member #110, NJ.

What series of coins allows you the opportunity to visit the places or things depicted on them? That's right, "United States Commemoratives"! Earlier this year, I came across a very beautiful Antietam. In addition, as a bonus, I acquired an original Antietam roller. It was at this point that I went to my numismatic library and pulled out the Green, along with Taxay and Slabaugh, and began to read and re-read for an hour

or so. It was then I decided to take a trip and visit some of the places our commemorative coins commemorate. To this end, I set out on Memorial Day Weekend (most fitting I might say) to rediscover America as depicted on two of our Commemorative coins Antietam and Gettysburg.

Fortunately my brother, who is also a collector, lives in Maryland and my trip served many purposes. It was a glorious morning when we arrived in Sharpsburg, the small Maryland town where the actual battle of Antietam was contested. The sun shone brightly, the air was crisp and filled with an electric sense of pride as as this tiny town prepared for its Memorial Day festivities. As we approached the battlefield museum and information center you could sense this was not just another ordinary day. We had just stepped back in time 123 years.

Part of the town's celebration included a recreation of some of the events that make this town famous. In the fields just behind the museum, the Union Army had made camp. Those were the same fields which saw much blood and mayhem more than a century ago. The objective of this impending battle under the direction of Union General George McClellan was to thwart the advancing Southern Army under General Robert E. Lee from gaining any further ground north. AS we will learn this was successful at a great cost of human life but Lee managed to engage the Union army once more on the Northern ground of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, just 10 months after Antietam.



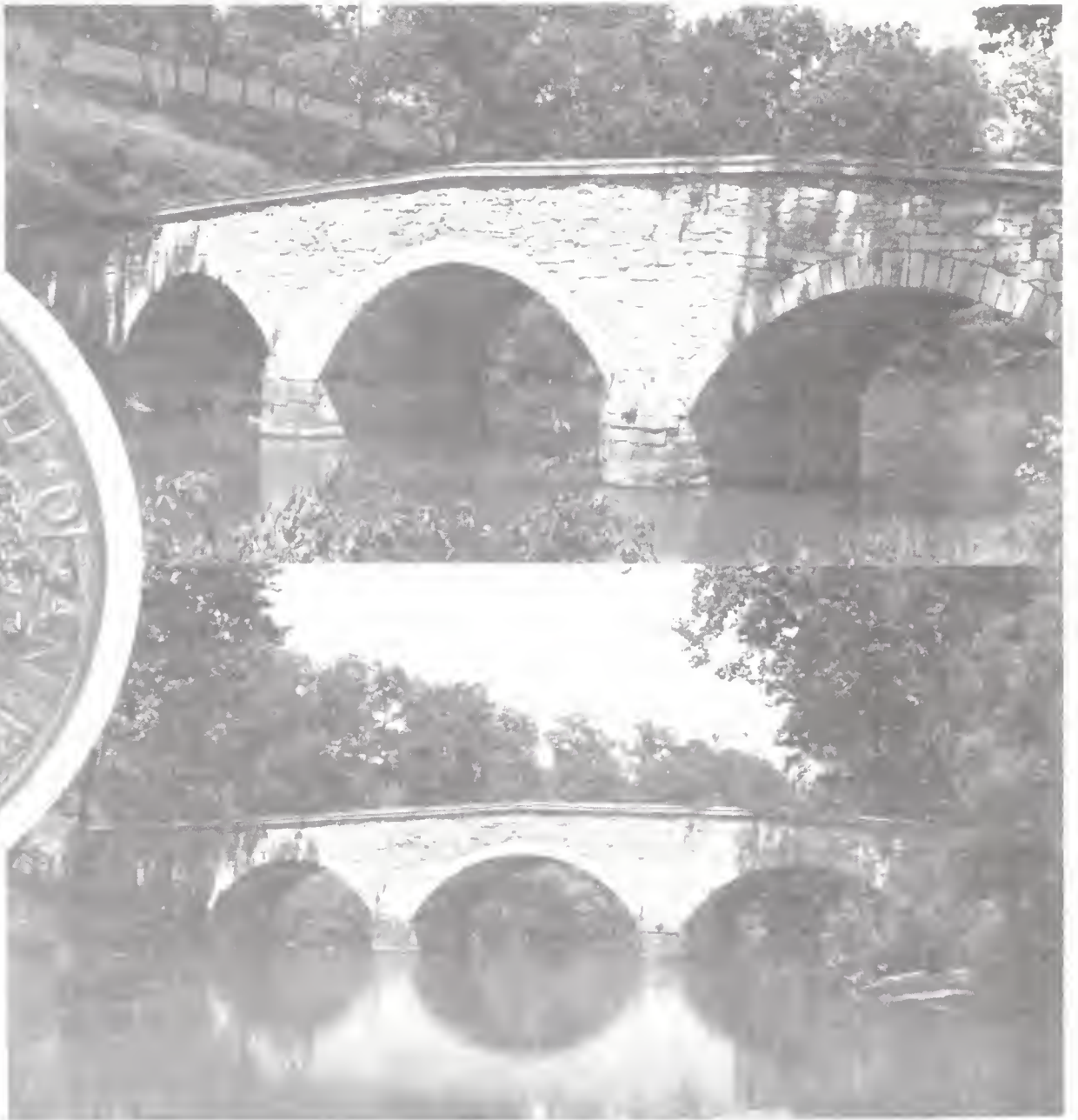
As we began our walk into history, we came across the camp's headquarters. The officers were meeting in their tent to set a strategy for the upcoming battle. You could almost sense the conversation. "I understand the Harpers Ferry has been taken with a large store of supplies. Lee needed those supplies." "Yes sir, the word from McClellan is that Lee is moving southward and will probably make his stand here in Sharpsburg".



we continued our walk through the camp, some soldiers were relaxing near their tents while others were lined up for inspection. It appeared to us that they didn't know we were even there. It was really kind of spooky! They were really playing the part. As was predicted by the soldiers in the headquarters tent an advance guard of the Union Army found Lee's army in Sharpsburg on the evening of September 15, 1862. The 16th was a day of positioning and on the 17th McClellan sent General Hooker's army to attack the Confederates' left side. Thus, the two armies engaged in what was to become the bloodiest single day of the Civil War.

As we toured the battlefield, we came upon the main purpose of the visit; "Burnside Bridge", which as you know, is depicted on the reverse of the Antietam Commemorative.

The bridge was built in 1836 some 26 years before the Battle of Antietam and was subsequently named for the Union General who commanded the troops which used the bridge as the pivotal point for their flanking attack on the southern edge of Sharpsburg. Its 12-foot road bed width seemed unusually spacious for the wagons and carriages that crossed the Antietam on the Old Monocacy Road before the war, but on September 17, 1862 those 12 feet were to become a bottleneck of death for the Union troops who tried swarming across it under withering Rebel fire. The bridge has been restored to its original condition even to the wooden coping that tops its walls. This bridge stands as a monument to the engineering skills of John Weaver, who erected it for the budget cost of \$2,300!*



The pictures of the bridge (reproduced with this article) were taken from different sides of Antietam Creek and from different angles to try and recapture what the coin's designer William Mark Simpson might have seen while sketching some 50 years ago. The enclosed photograph seems to show the angle used in the coin's design. The bank is in the right foreground and the trees on the hill to the left and rear of the bridge. Keep in mind that the trees have grown and the bank has eroded some in 50 years.

While at the Bridge we encountered a small Rebel force going through maneuvers. As they marched over Burnside Bridge, I couldn't help but wonder how things might have been different had the Rebels been able to hold their position on the hill overlooking the bridge. The simple fact of the matter is they were badly outnumbered. Wave after wave of Union soldiers were sent across the bridge. At the end of the day's fighting, the Battle of Antietam claimed: Confederate losses 2,700 killed, 9,029 wounded; Union losses 2,108 killed, 9,549 wounded. Over a thousand on both sides later died of their wounds.

These numbers are staggering when you consider the weapons used had to be reloaded after each shot. What surprises me is that more men didn't die of their wounds. For those among you fortunate enough not to have experienced the horrors of war, the museum previously mentioned may prove hard to believe. On display were various shapes and sizes of bullets and cannon balls which when viewed make you cringe at the thought of being struck by one. Equally terrifying was the display of the surgeons' battlefield kit. It contained an assortment of some very sharp blades and what appeared to be a hack saw. It would seem that under battle conditions there was little the doctor could do, so if the wound was serious and it looked as if the soldier might die, out would come the blades and saw.



Having spent the entire morning at Antietam, it was time to move on to our second stop which was Gettysburg, a good hour's drive away. I must tell you now that Gettysburg is huge and that the time we had remaining could not do justice to a proper visit. However, the first sight encountered was this sea of tiny American Flags waving over equally tiny headstones. This was the cemetery which was dedicated November 19, 1863 by President Lincoln in a two-page handwritten speech commonly referred to as the Gettysburg Address. Folks, let me tell you if you don't get a big lump in your throat and can't feel a sense of national honor having seen this cemetery, perhaps that's where you are, because you ain't breathing!

As I said this park is so huge and my time was running short that I plan a return visit. Perhaps this will give some of you the inspiration to make an expedition of your own and tell us about the Oakland Bay Bridge, report on the progress of the Pioneer Memorial in Davidson Park depicted on the Elgin. How about the carving on Stone Mountain or a story on Fays Tavern at Bennington which was rejected as a design idea for the Vermont. I'm sure with a little thought many fine articles can be written and pictures can be used to retell a story to our club through the pages of the COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL.

*BRIDGES: OUR LEGACY IN STONE, printed 1965, Washington County Historical Society.

On behalf of the ENTIRE membership, I would now like to thank Joe Wesp for his thoughtfulness in sharing with us his love for the hobby, our Society, and country. Joe, we're lucky to have members like you!

*** Observations From Reno ***

by Gerald A. Blum (aka Jerry), Member #534, NV

OBSERVATIONS FROM RENO

Isn't it interesting how one of the "full page" dealers in COIN WORLD does not know the difference between a Bridgeport and a Robinson? Well, I guess P.T. and the good senator both look alike. I also noticed that another "full page" dealer has more MS-67 Commems than probably exist in the known world, and at CDN MS-65 prices! (I always start my day with a bit of sarcasm.)

I just finished a conversation with Ray Mercer. I thought I should congratulate him on an excellent issue of the COMMEMORATIVE TRAIL. With all his other odds and ends I think he does one hell of a good job. Why not drop him a line via Society Headquarters and tell him so, or ask him to send you a MS-67 Columbian, Robinson, BTW, or something equally easy for educational purposes. (Editor's note: Keep dreaming, Jerry!)

One field I am quite familiar with is auction markets. An auction market is defined as the meeting of buyer and seller to negotiate a price that is acceptable to both parties. This marketplace may or may not put both parties in direct physical contact and may contain more than one of each of the transactors. The most perfect market is generally considered to be the New York Stock Exchange. We, as coin collectors and investors, are all participating in an auction market setting.

Our market is nowhere near as perfect as the NYSE. Every coin is different from every other one. Thus, the products are heterogeneous. The stock market, on the other hand, is a homogeneous market in that if two players own 100 shares of IBM, both certificates have the same value. The condition is of no consequence. Additionally, all transactions are reported to all players quickly. The information content is reflected in the price at any given time and all players know within a very narrow range what the value of their asset is. This is NOT the case of the coin market. While you may perceive your Lafayette as an MS-70, most, if not all buyers will see it as something else.

It is simply a matter of what is the asset worth to you. If you are the seller you want to sell high. Conversely, if you are the buyer, you want to buy low. When both the buyer and the seller feel they are getting a good deal, a transaction occurs. The potential buyer does not have to have the coin. Owning any coin is not a matter of life or death. While I am probably as obsessed as anyone, I realize that owning a Grant (with or without star) is not as important as my health, my house, my car, or many other things in life. (Editor's note: Thank God!)

I just returned from the Las Vegas Show. It was interesting. I saw some beautiful coins and some junk. One dealer gave me a show-and-tell on the most stunning Lafayette and Pan Pac I have ever seen (along with other items from his personal collection). These items brought tears to my eyes. While there were some nice coins there, the only thing I purchased was a set of Columbian Expo tickets in pristine condition. These items are really neat. The engraving is unbelievable and I seriously doubt if they could be duplicated today (other than with a xerox).

Another observation I have come up with. I think most of the dealers we complain about are basically honest. The problem is they have never bothered to learn their craft. In

the good old days a coin was a coin. It was Unc or it wasn't. Now we have the case where you may be an expert on one series of coins but that knowledge does not carry over to another series. While Morgans are all different, depending on year, mint, etc., everyone basically knows what they should look like. How many people know what a Hawaiian, Pan Pac, Sesqui, etc., really look like? Can you compare a Grant to a Grant with Star? Can you compare a 26S and 37D Oregon. Yes you can. But you are comparing an apple with an orange. In fact, there are many different types among the same date and mint coin in more than one instance (Calif. Jub., Fort Van., Isabella, etc.). Again, ask questions. If the dealer doesn't ever have the time he (or she) probably doesn't have the knowledge.

One last comment. It really relieves me to know that if you buy a coin with a certain certificate you have a guarantee that the coin will be called that grade in the event you choose to auction it with a member dealer. What does this mean? Absolutely nothing. With a little patience we can all find MS-60 coins selling at auction for prices in excess of MS-65 prices. We have all probably also seen MS-67 coins sell for prices in the MS-60 to 63 range. Remember! You are buying a coin, not a certificate.

Don't forget to send your dues to Don Carmody. Also, sign up another member.

Editor's Comment...

Jerry, once again, thanks for a very interesting article! I'm happy you have gotten into the habit of sharing your thoughts with us and that you are getting the most out of your membership. I wish more people would be willing to jot their accumulative thoughts down and then write us this type of article! I am a firm believer that one thought leads to another and I'm sure your insights have started more than one member thinking! Keep up the excellent work, we appreciate your help!

*** Commemorative Coins - Hawaii ***

by Irving Kam, Member #165, HI

Since early 1985 the U.S. Commemorative coin series has been exciting the various price guides with numerous plus signs and as this article is being prepared, they are still red hot. All grades are being affected with the main focus on the full ticket MS-65's or better. Double "Greysheet" is not unusual. Promotion? Perhaps, but when you pause to really consider their sheer beauty or their low surviving mintages they are still under priced. The high/low price cycle of commems is not unlike a roller coaster ride and they have drifted too low the past few years. Apparently now seems the right time for this series' value line to correct itself. Even investment houses are touting this area of the market for inclusion in their client's portfolios. Although the main concern here is the collectable aspect of Commemorative coinage, dealers recognize the investment potential and we all know what happened to prices when investors are active.

Generally speaking, the Commemorative coin market in Hawaii is pretty much the same as on the mainland except for the volume. The difficulty of locating a somewhat pristine example is still exceedingly elusive anywhere. It's been a while since I saw a Monroe, Columbian Expo of either year, Lexington-Concord, or California-Jubilee that could go all the way. The same for the Washington-Carver or the Booker T. Washington issues. And these are considered to be the more "common" or most encountered coins. Likewise, the Spanish Trail, Grant, Missouri, Pan Pacific, Fort Vancouver, Alabama, or Hawaiian but with a fancier price tag. Mishandled, misuse, improper cleaning and storage, all attribute to the already low surviving mintages. Add to that the pieces residing in "strong hands" by both collector and investor, plus those that happened to make it out of mint bags in a decent state. All these factors, and more, equals scarcity. Pressured along by the current demand, Gem Commemoratives present a challenge that may be both pleasurable and profitable.

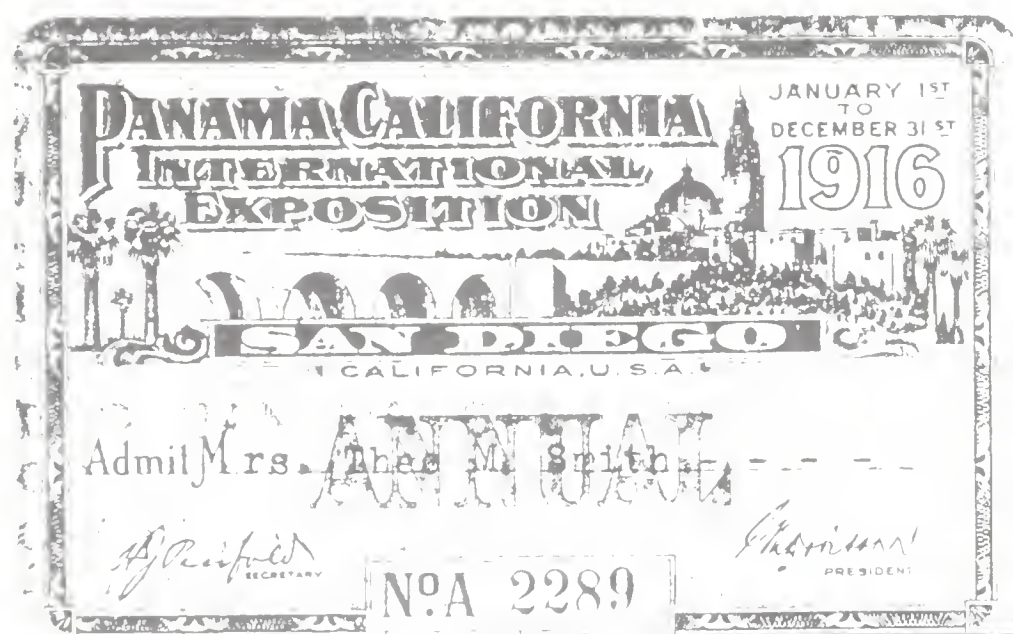
There are also some interestingly related material in the form of medals, mailing holders, or brochures that are highly collectable. The holders are scarce and even harder to locate than the coins they originally held. So are the brochures. Medals are a little "easier" to find with the many varied Columbian Exposition offerings leading the way. They make a splendid collection by themselves and often are. Many more tie-ins exist, including stamps, and the possibilities only help to enhance this already fascinating series.

Grading has and always will pose a bit of a problem. Over-graded, over-dipped, washed out, whizzed up coins, are a reality and will always be around. Rub will always be rub. Friction will always be friction. Everything you've read or experienced holds true for this series and I can't expound on the matter any further. Just don't let the many varied designs be intimidating for this is where their beauty lies. Besides, there are some wonderfully informative publications authored by experienced and learned numismatists readily available.

In closing, it appears that when it comes to the better stuff, there seems to be people willing to pay more than the next person within a reasonable range. Hawaii's Commemorative coin situation is a "today get-tomorrow no more" kind of deal and if you hesitate to ponder what a gem lists for in any price guide, that coin will only exist in memory. Aloha!

Editor's Comment...

I would now like to thank Mr. Kam for his enthusiastic article! Irving advises us that it first appeared in the Honolulu Coin Club's newsletter, "Nu Hou Dala Paa" (easy for him to say!) and I appreciate him allowing its reprint here! I find it interesting how a collector's geographical location greatly influences the type of collecting material that is available. If YOU have any insights in collecting in YOUR area, please follow Irving's lead and post them along!



by Thomas M. Best, Member #81, CA

Before getting into my little story about the Panama California International Exposition of 1915, the preceding pass to this expo is pale orange with black and gray printing. The No. (2289) is printed in red. The owner's picture is obviously cut out from a photograph and pasted to the pass. The sticker is brown, white (building), gold with green foliage. The background for the printing "SAN DIEGO EXPOSITION 1915" is navy blue.

As most of you know, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition was held in 1915 in San Francisco, California; but an official exposition was also held in San Diego, California, to celebrate the same event. For the celebration, San Diego developed 1,400 acres of downtown land that had been donated to the city some years before. To celebrate the event, San Diego built what is now known as Balboa Park and all the buildings and towers to house the exhibits.



The Mint produced the 1915 Pan-Pac Commemoratives in observance of the event celebrated in San Francisco; however, no mention of the San Diego Exposition was made. Perhaps to make up for this slight, or oversight, the Mint produced the 1935-36 San Diego Commemoratives, known as the California-Pacific International Exposition Half Dollars. Interestingly, the two buildings depicted on the coin; the Observation Tower of the State of California Building and the Dome of the St. Francis Chapel, were both built in 1915 for the previous Exposition.

Today Balboa Park is recognized internationally as one of the great parks of the world. The Park not only houses the famous San Diego Zoo but also many outstanding old and new buildings containing museums, art galleries, space exhibits, etc. In fact, the building that is part of the Observation Tower is known as the Museum of Man and contains many artifacts showing the development of man.

A trip to this park is well worth the day it will take you to go through it. If you are visiting San Diego, the Tower and Dome are still there and are more fully appreciated in person.

Editor's Comment...

Bob, thanks for the great article on the Exposition and for reminding our readers of the endless fun to be had collecting Commemorative related memorabilia! Frankly, I just love these interesting bits of Commemorative history and I'm very pleased you are thoughtful enough to share your findings with us!

*** A Rose Is A Rose! ***

by Robert Colby, Member #94, NY

Almost every week you will read in the different numismatic papers, articles; or at shows you will hear the same thing, "This dealer and that dealer really do not know what they are saying or writing about the Commems." I'm not talking about small dealers. I'm talking about people who, in my opinion, are misleading the collector or collector investor. I definitely feel that if well known people can knock one another it is time for a lesser known "tiny, tiny", little bit of a dealer, collector, investor to disagree very strongly with one of the top notch writers of today and truly well known men in the field. I just don't believe some of the things he says.

As an example let's talk about the Isabella Quarter, he says you can buy it in MS-63 for \$800. His definition of the MS-63 Isabella is a nice Choice piece. "A coin with eye appeal - coin should not have any major problem, no bad marks, scratches or blemishes", "highly scattered ticks-a few light bag marks are accepted." Who is fooling who?! This is not a description of a MS-63 Isabella or a MS-63 Lafayette as he states, get this, Lafayette \$1800. (Editor's note: I guess I'm not the guilty party!)

This well known gentleman is talking about a 65 not a 63 and where do we find a coin with this description for \$800 and \$1800. O.K., let us assume he is correct and this is the description for an MS-63 coin. WHO CARES?! If today one is able to find an Isabella or a Lafayette that has eye appeal and original surfaces -a coin with no bad marks, scratches or blemishes- but only light scattered ticks, I believe every one of us in the Commem Society will offer not \$800 for the Isabella but probably \$3000 and up, who knows whether one would stop at \$5000 and more.

I was offered very recently an Isabella for \$3400, no grade was written down. The very well known Commem and coin expert said to just look at the coin. The luster and the eye appeal were great. As a matter of fact, I wanted to make love to the coin. (Editor's note: !)

With the naked eye it had absolutely no marks at all, no scratches at all, no blemishes at all. As a matter of fact I really could not find anything at all that was wrong. Nevertheless, there was something wrong. At 9 o'clock there was a rim mark. Normally if I was not so excited and it was not for the heat of the Bourse floor commotion, I would have remembered-never, never, never look at the coin in the holder. Politely ask the dealer to remove the coin so you may look at the coin carefully in your hands. If I was a little more careful I would have seen the rim mark. I don't care what anybody says- If a coin has a fairly good rim mark you must down grade the coin, and if it is disturbing you should pass on the coin.

Since I was dealing with a very respected, well known, honest dealer and Commem expert, he immediately said to me, as he saw my face lighting up and the sweat on face becoming more pronounced, "Bob, if the coin didn't have that rim mark you would be looking at a \$5000 coin". (Editor's note: And I might add, if you had two of them they'd probably be even worth \$10,000 for the pair!) I believed him and I know him to be correct, because I dream of that coin.

With the formal training that I have and the experience I have developed and knowing what ANACS would say, I knew in my mind that technically I was looking at a MS-63-64 coin. Somebody may say MS-64, somebody may say 63+, or 64-. Okay, so it's an MS-63, or MS-64, or MS-63+, or MS-64-. It would have been the greatest insult for me to say,

"\$800," as the other expert has written in his newsletter. It would have been crazy for me to say \$1,500, \$2,000, and yet I honestly felt I'm looking at a 63, or 64, or 63+, or 64- coin.

It is for these reasons I say, when you look at a Commemorative coin forget the "labels" completely at first. Look at the coin. You should know if it is a \$800 coin, or a \$2,000, or a \$3,000 coin, or a \$5,000 coin. With this particular coin in a holder you hardly see the rim nick. What hits you is the beauty of the coin and the dreams you can have with this coin - a real beauty - a coin you can be proud to own. Where are you going to buy a technical MS-63, 64, or as I said before, a coin of this caliber for \$800? Give me a 100 Isabellas', technically 63 to 64, at \$800 (even \$1,000 or \$1,200) and I'll at least double my money within a few moments on the floor.

As you read the commercial newsletters, you should read as many as you can, and as you go to shows, you should go to as many as you can, and as you study at ANACS, you should study there because their advanced course in Commems and Gold is a must for learning in my opinion... Toss everything around in your head, evaluate on your own, and don't believe everything you read... Digest as much knowledge as you can, especially on Commems...

Then make up your own mind and your decisions... And as you are ready to put your money down on the table - don't do it! Hesitate for a moment and remember you should have one or two Commem' advisors at all times look at the coin. Call them up or send them your coin. If they agree with you, then you are a winner. It is the coin you are buying, not the label.

When you are knowledgeable, you will know what a coin is worth. (Editor's note: At the time of purchase, something FAR MORE IMPORTANT than the coin's current, grading label). Someday we'll be seeing 63++++++, 64++++++, and 65++++++. Do you think you'll have fun then? HAVE FUN NOW through KNOWLEDGE and KNOWING the RIGHT people. They are here to help you at all times and they don't ask too much in return. Happy hunting!

Editor's Comment...

I would now like to thank Bob for his thought provoking article as he has hit upon a VERY IMPORTANT subject! Although we all must learn how to grade our coins, we should not neglect to recognize their VALUE either. In today's marketplace, I think we are having trouble telling the difference between a coin's true grade and its monetary label.

Let me explain it this way. A collector might approach a dealer and ask, "What's the grade of that Isabella in your showcase?" The dealer will reply, "MS-64." The collector will then carefully examine the coin and say to himself, "This guy's insane! This coin is only at best an MS-63+ and probably an MS-63," and walk away shaking his head. What happened here?

Actually, we don't really know as neither party provided enough verbal information! However, in many cases, I think the consumer was interested in obtaining his concept of an Isabella that GRADED MS-64 and the dealer was stating he had an example he believed was worth an "MS-64" VALUE. In other words, many collectors use the "MS" labels to denote GRADE, while most dealers are using them to denote their ASKING PRICE. This causes quite a few problems.

Due to the popularity of such pricing guides as the COIN DEALER NEWSLETTER, many dealers will "MS label" (i.e. price) their coins in relationship to what "grading column" most accurately describes their asking price! What the dealer in our little scenario was really probably saying is, "Here, take a look at this Isabella and see if it makes you happy. I want \$2,500 for it." However, this translation didn't appear to the collector who was assuming the dealer's term "MS-64" was a technical GRADE related to The ANA Grading Book, Photo-Grade, or whatever GRADING STANDARD he is used to using!

Now, I'm not saying one party is right and the other party is wrong, but it still makes a very interesting point. If you know how to recognize value, what real difference does the "label" make? Of course, if you don't know how to ascertain VALUE and/or GRADE, you have a big problem that certainly transcends this article, but let's stick to the point at hand. As BOB COIBY so aptly stated, "You are buying the coin, not the label," and as JERRY BIRM said, "the coin market is not the stock market." No two coins are alike, even if they should possess the same technical grade. Hence, pricing labels (many times in the form of "MS labels") will seldom be consistent with a coin's technical grade.

As a dealer, I am constantly reminded of this fact when I attend shows. When looking through a dealer's inventory, I make a STRICT habit of NOT LOOKING at holders in respect to their "Grading Labels." If I used them as a basis for GRADING, I would end up buying very few coins. Instead, I go through the selection and when one catches my gaze in regards to its eye appeal, I ask a PRICE. Frankly, I can see little point in arguing about a +, -, or MS label when the whole idea of the exercise is to buy coins I like.

Picking out an Isabella, I will ask, "how much?" The last thing I wish to inquire is, "what grade?" The reason for this is simple. The dealer's concept of the coin's grade doesn't interest me. I'm concerned with his idea of value! If his answer is \$2,000, which can simply be translated to, "Is this coin worth \$2,000 to you?" I can now make my decision. I have encountered "MS-64" Isabellas' that are worth \$1,000 to \$2,000 and more! There are no set rules in relating a coin's technical grade directly to its value, so why agonize when you can easily decide by price?

When buying coins, comprehending value is FAR MORE IMPORTANT than the coin's implied grading label, just as your understanding of a coin's grade is FAR MORE IMPORTANT than that of the seller's. It is necessary to have a good understanding of a coin's grade, but this means little if you can't comprehend its VALUE. The seller may label a coin "MS-63.8" and you may label it "MS-63-," but this Passion Play isn't the real crux of the matter. The game of "is it MS-63.8 or isn't it?" can go on forever, but if you really like the coin and want to buy it, what it really boils down to is, "is it worth the seller's ASKING price?"



1893 Columbian With A Repunched "93" In The Date...

BILL FIVAZ (Member #466) was nice enough to post your Editor these excellent photos of a repunched date! Bill, an avid member of the American Microscope Society (AMA), went on to say, "I realize it's not rare by any means and probably not even scarce, but it IS interesting AND fun to look at!" Thanks, Bill, but please don't apologize! The whole idea of this newsletter is to have fun!

Opening Celebration

February 12, 1948 - February 12, 1949

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE MEMORIAL

Established at his Birthplace in Franklin County, Virginia, to Commemorate
His Life and to Perpetuate His Ideals and Teachings.

Post Office

BOOKER WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE, VIRGINIA

Dear Friend:

We are today sending your order for Booker T. Washington Memorial half dollars. It gave us a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction to fill this order. We have exercised every care in handling these coins and hope that you will be pleased with the condition in which you receive them.

The net proceeds from the sale of these half dollars will go towards perpetuating the ideals and teachings of Booker T. Washington through the establishment of a "Service Memorial" at his birthplace. We are confident that this program will succeed in proportion as we can secure the assistance of friends like you. We are inclosing an order blank that perhaps you might use in giving to a friend who might also be interested in helping.

Your name has been placed in our permanent files and you will hear from us from time to time as our program progresses. May we again say we appreciate your cooperating with us in this worthy undertaking.

Yours truly,

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON BIRTHPLACE MEMORIAL

S. J. Phillips
S. J. Phillips
President

SJP/s
1 Incl

"From Slave Cabin to Hall of Fame"

3. Helpfulness Toward Others

"The highest test of the civilization of any race is in its willingness to extend a helping hand to the less fortunate."

YOUR Purchase

of the Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollar or your *contribution* will aid in the development of a program which will make possible the widespread teachings of the sane philosophy herein expressed. Such a program will not only help America today but will contribute to the well-being of *future generations*.

Please Address All Correspondence to
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Booker Washington Birthplace, Virginia

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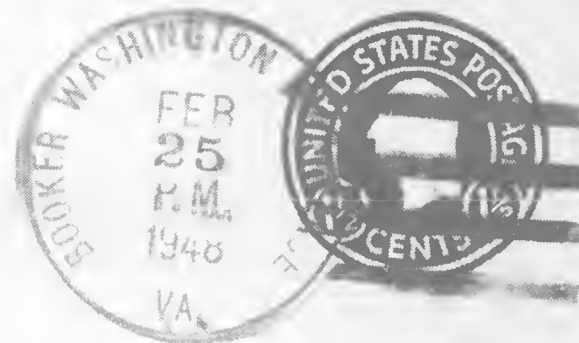
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THIRD CLASS MAIL

POSTMASTER THIS PARCEL MAY BE OPENED FOR POSTAL INSPECTION IF NECESSARY



Mr. A. A. Bedient
New Canaan Ave.
Honolulu, Conn.



Booker T. Washington said in his Atlanta Exposition address:

1. Extremest Folly

"The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing."

2. Mutual Progress

"In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."



A Half Dollar with a Mission



Society Auction!

In order to raise money for our Society and have some fun in the process, we are going to have a mail bid auction! Starting on Page 35, you will see a letter, holder, and mailing envelope, complete with a 1946-P BTW coin. Your Editor has donated all this material and the ENTIRE price realized will go to the Society.

As you can see, the coin displays its original toning and the reverse glue impression matches up with the holder. However, before you go to your friendly bank for a loan, please be advised that this specimen grades MS-60. There is rather large scratch on the front of the coin! "We have exercised every care in handling these coins and hope that you will be pleased with the condition in which you receive them," my foot! Although it IS the original coin. the value of this "set" is primarily in the paperwork!

If you wish to bid, here's what to do: mail your bid, along with your membership number to Helen Carmody (Box 302, Huntington Beach, CA 92648). On the OUTSIDE of the envelope, write: "MAIL BID." All sealed bids will be open at our FUN SHOW meeting and the highest bidder declared. Estimated value: \$100+. In case of a tie, the first postmark gets it. No "buy bids" or "progressions." Just let us know what you want to pay, ONE SHOT and it's over. No Minimum bid is required.

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COMMEMORATIVE
HALF DOLLAR

1636 - 1936

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Application for Long Island Tercentenary Half Dollar
Commemorative Coins

Name of Bank Date

I hereby subscribe for Long Island Tercentenary Half Dollar Commemorative
Coins and deposit herewith money order
check for \$.....
cash

I understand that when the Coins are ready for distribution you will notify me to call for
same. I also understand that if for any reason you are unable to deliver all or part of the
Coins subscribed for money covering subscription price of Coins not delivered will be refunded.

Subscriber's Name
Street Address
Town
Subscriptions may be made through any Nassau County Bank or direct to Harry L.
Hedeker, Treasurer of Nassau County, Mineola, N. Y.



Long TERCENTENARY

Island HALF DOLLAR

A commemorative HALF DOLLAR has been authorized by a Special Act of Congress to be issued in connection with the Long Island Tercentenary, which marks the first white settlement on Long Island in June, 1636.

Number Limited—To Be Issued by One Mint • The Congress has authorized the issuance of 100,000 coins, all of which will be produced in one mint.

Sculptor • The sculptor whose selection has been approved by the Treasury Department and the Fine Arts Commission is Howard Kenneth Weinman of Forest Hills, Long Island. Mr. Weinman has been associated with his father, Adolph Alexander Weinman, who has designed several of the coins in use by the United States Government and many important works of art and pieces of sculpture in the na-

tion's Capitol, together with notable public memorials and other works.

By Subscription Only • The coins will be sold by subscription only and applications will be limited to five (5) coins to a single subscriber.

Nassau County's allotment is 15,000, and its population is approximately 350,000 and as many of the citizens of this area will undoubtedly wish to have a lasting memento of this historic event, the Committee anticipates the authorized issue will be promptly subscribed.

If the experience of collectors with other special coins, is any criterion, then it is fair to assume that this Half Dollar will have an increasing value with the passage of time.

(Tear off Subscription Blank, reverse side)

Long Island Order Blank!

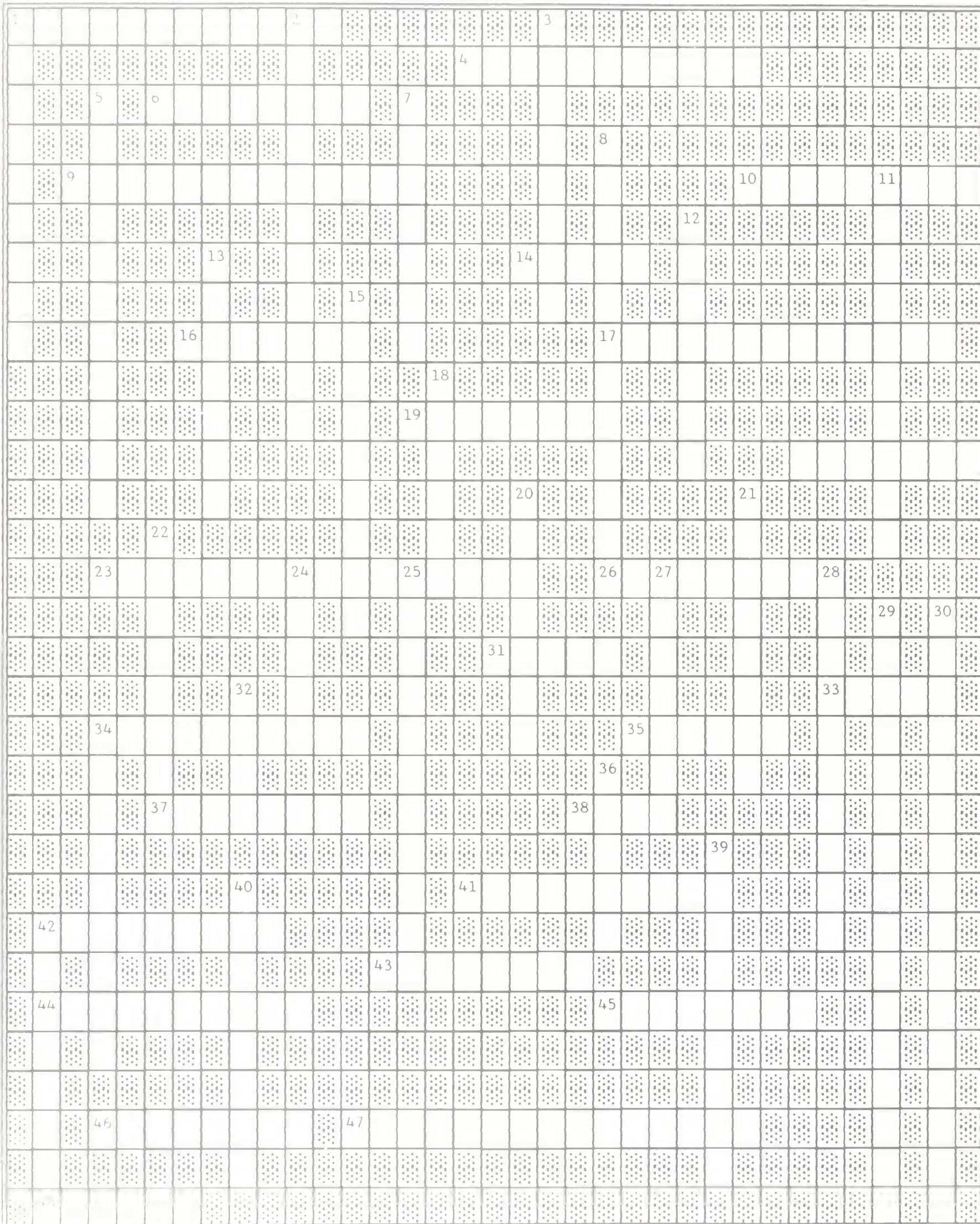
This seldom encountered, order blank was thoughtfully passed along to us by Gordon Paul Owens (Member #350, OH) and he advises us that its color is "a sort of sickening lime-green." I would like to thank him for his desire to share as order blanks are generally very difficult to find. I have only one question. Although it's early in the morning, I have read the blessed thing twice and I still can't locate an area on the order blank that denotes HOW MUCH they are asking for these things. What did a collector have to do in those days, guess?

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* * * * *
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*      For Heaven's Sake....
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*      Don't Forget To Contact us about...
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*      Society Sponsored Seminars!
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COMMEMORATIVE CROSSWORDS
by Richard J. Kolodziej member #414



CLUES DOWN

1. Monarch II was a bear, there, then.
2. He seems to be saying "Stop, White Man!"
3. Generals McClellan and Lee were opposing commanders in this battle.
5. Commemorates the founding of this State's Capitol, but they forgot to mention it on the coin.
7. The catamount is both apocryphal and irrelevant; not so for Ira.
8. The english translation of the explorer's name, Cabeza de Vaca, should lead you to the obverse on this coin.
11. An exposition celebrating the opening of the Panama Canal.
12. Sir Walter Raleigh, Virginia Dare and her mother appear.
13. See 19 ACROSS.
15. Two Generals of the war of the Revolution.
18. Neptune, a whale spouting, a Triton blowing a horn, all on the reverse.
20. Gov. Bradford and the Mayflower are featured.
21. Another illegal coin (portrait of a living person); a repeat of the confederate symbolism of another coin.
22. The Board of Lady Managers managed this one.
24. The Pioneer statue financed by this issue in 1934 was still incomplete in 1981.
25. "One Fatt Calfe...Every Year Forever..." was a condition of the sale of this city's land.
27. The only Royal Mace presented to an American city in colonial times.
28. Shields of two armies on the reverse; two soldiers that look like brothers on the obverse.
29. Two cities remembered for a famous battle.
30. "Proceeds to Oppose the Spread of Communism...", a map of the U.S.A. on the reverse, brilliantly labeled "USA".
32. Harry S. Truman approved this State's Centennial coin.
34. His name is spelled correctly on the coin, wrong on the city. Holy Moses!
36. Chief Black Fish and a noted frontiersman appear on the reverse; only Swiatek (or was it Breen?) could possibly explain the chief's pose-and he does!
39. "4th DAY OF JULY ANNO DOMINI 1836" is on the obverse.
40. A Navy Captain faces west, a native Chieftan extends his hand in welcome.
42. TWO capitol buildings on the obverse; the reverse symbolism, while simple, is almost as inscrutable as that of 37 across.

CLUES ACROSS

1. From Slave Cabin to Hall of Fame.
4. The Royal Charter of the Colony was hidden in a tree.
6. A bear, a goddess, a gold miner, a sailing ship, a shield, a cornucopia and mountains; all on one side!
9. A Doctor become furtrader (obv.), Mt. Hood, reverse.
10. "This way to the egress" he once said. The animal on the reverse is not an egress, but looks like a shark to some, when inverted.
14. This state's coat of arms include a farmer with scythe, a seaman with anchor, a moose with antlers.
16. First use of a living person's portrait on a U.S. coin violated federal law.
17. The South's counterpart to Mt. Rushmore.
19. With 13 DOWN; many church groups protested the issue of this coin as violating the First Amendment.
23. George Washington and Calvin Coolidge pictured; both inappropriate to this coin.
26. This native son objected to the use of his portrait, but it was used anyway.
31. The star on early issues had no particular significance, but brought criticism, citing venal motives.
33. Six flags are almost obscured on an incredibly crowded reverse.
34. Panning for gold is still popular here.
35. Two female figures represent the western hemisphere.
37. A Quapaw Indian and Miss Liberty obverse; lots of confederate symbolism on the reverse.
38. Hold the Fort!
41. "America's Troubadour" is on the obverse, but he had no connection with the musical life of this city.
42. An Italian, sponsored by a Spaniard, commemorated in Chicago. His ship appears to have wheels.
43. "Kalmar Nyckel" was used by Swedes to arrive here.
44. A Dutch settler and an Algonquin indian in Breuckelin, before the Dodgers got there.
45. Why is the White man still holding his gun, when the Red man has out the peace pipe?
46. Wait until the feminists find out what this State's motto (rev.) means! Most obverse strikes look like one of them punched Cecil in the nose!
47. The first coin to commemorate the centennial of a State's admission to the Union.
48. Busy as a beaver chewing on a maple branch.

A very special thanks to Dick Kolodziej for taking the time to construct this enormous puzzle, 35 squares x 31! As Dick says, "If anyone out there is kooky (or masochistic) enough to try to improve on that, I hereby throw down the gauntlet...anyone who beats that wins all my MS67 Lafayettes and Isabellas!!!"

Answers to our last issue's puzzle

COMMEMORATIVELY SPEAKING by Joe Wesp, N.J.

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Buying Tips

Robinson Arkansas

by Ray Mercer, Member #20, CT

Although I'm sure many of you might disagree with my sentiments, over the years I have acquired a rather strange fondness for this coin. Needless to say, in an artistic sense, its fundamental design does leave something to be desired, but not all of my friends are fashion models either!

Be that as it may, I think the general numismatic population is finally realizing MS-65 (and especially better!) specimens are very elusive. Not only from a "technical grade" point of view, but also in respect to something far more important - EYE APPEAL. In order to get a better idea of how to properly view this coin, let's go through its four, major grading steps.

Luster...

The ability to properly measure what is the acceptable degree of luster has always been a problem when grading this coin. Many pieces display granular surfaces and tend to be "satin" (or even almost "matte" if you like) by nature. However, this is not a problem in itself as the nature of the luster can be traced to the physical makeup of the dies. The real obstacle in determining the status of the Robinson's luster is that its intensity can be found in varying degrees, from weak to strong.

Unfortunately, many pieces are dead and lifeless. Of course, we shouldn't expect "satin" pieces to project like "brilliant" luster examples, but many specimens still have poor luster FOR "satin" finish coins! The trick to determining "good satin luster" is to make sure the coin displays strong HIGHLIGHTS. The way to gain a solid understanding of this issue's HIGHLIGHTS, is to look at as many "mint state" (MS-60 - MS-65+) examples as you can.

Although a specimen may grade "only" MS-60 or MS-63, this does not mean it can't be useful for gaining knowledge on higher grade coins! Frankly, with a little field work, you will encounter many lower grade pieces that have excellent luster and highlights equal to MS-65 & better examples, but they display too many marks to reach MS-65 status. Learn by Looking! By studying a flock of MS-60 & MS-63 specimens, you will have a good

base of knowledge when you eventually find that MS-65 coin!

As you go about examining a large number of specimens, you will quickly discover this issue has been generally abused by excessive dipping and in quite a few instances, harsh cleaning. This sad fact can be readily attributed to the lack of understanding on the part of the numismatic community. As in the vast majority of cases, we can be justly accused of being our own worst enemy! As with the Elgin, Lynchburg, California ("satin" luster type, not "chrome-like"), Bay Bridge, and other "satin" Commemorative issues, people had a tendency to want these coins to "match" the luster on their 1937-D Oregon, Albany, and Delaware. Hence, dipping/cleaning became the name of the game and these coins look just horrible to the educated eye.

When searching for a nice Robinson, remember the "nature" of its luster is satin/granular. However, this is not to say that you cannot find examples exhibiting strong highlights. As with everything else, COMPARISON is your best road to knowledge. LOOK at as many specimens as you can before making your final decision.

Occasionally, examples can be found displaying very INTENSE "satin" luster. Experience has taught me that these pieces are very difficult to locate and when ALL their other grading points (strike, lack of marks, and toning) are superior, command very hefty premiums!

Strike...

Fortunately, the Fates have smiled upon us in this department as weakness of strike is not a roving problem with this issue as it is with the regular Arkansas coins. However, it always pays to be observant, so check for any aberrations to this rule. Pay particular attention to the ribbon running across the eagle's breast and you won't go wrong.

Marks...

Although luster can be a problem when attempting to locate an MS-65 specimen, excessive marks are the real obstacle you will invariably encounter when seeking a specimen deserving this lofty status. One has but to look at the photograph accompanying this article to see my point! The high, unprotected relief of Senator Robinson has proven to be an excellent landing strip for all "in-coming" marks on this coin.

Let's take a good look at the photo and analyze what has happened to this specimen. First, we see a track mark (the impression from the reeded edge of another coin) in the form of three, uniform hits running down Robinson's temple almost to the edge of the eyebrow. Moving on down, we encounter a cut located between his jaw & cheekbone. If this wasn't enough, there's a rather nasty scrape that runs almost the entire length of his jawbone and chin! Obviously, this just wrecks havoc with the flow of the design and disrupts the eye appeal of the coin.

However, I would now like to remind the gentle reader that in the vast majority of instances one should expect and tolerate a hint of "die abrasion" (planchet abrasion to be exact) on Robinson's high points (cheekbone & jawbone area). Remember, we aren't looking for a coin TOTALLY FREE of marks, but we are seeking an example with no DETRACTING MARKS, especially on the coin's FOCAL POINT (Robinson's massive face).

Numismatic abuse marks (a persistent problem with this issue and an extreme detriment to a coin's eye appeal) are also something to guard against. Slide marks are a common dilemma and when found, will usually appear across the temple, cheek, and jaw. Cleaning hairlines will frequently materialize when you least expect them, so it is always wise to slowly tip & rotate every example under a direct light!!! Regardless of the grade (AU - MS-67) you are seeking, I strongly suggest you avoid examples with NUMISMATIC ABUSE. They display a disturbing uniformity that greatly hampers the eye appeal of a coin.

Toning...

I'm not about to tell you what steady colors to expect or dictate the progression toning will take as I still lack the ability to turn water into wine. However, I will provide you with some general facts that can be applied to ALL coins.

The intensity of an example's toning is projected by the coin's luster. The "better" the luster, the more lively the toning. Conversely, the "duller" the luster, the less lively the toning. Since, for the most part, the Robinson is a rather granular/satin type coin, we can't logically expect the toning to display the rich "blast" common to a 1926-S Oregon Trail.

My best advice to you is to make sure your toned example displays IRIDESCENCE. Slowly tip & rotate the coin and the toning, although not "bright" in the traditional sense of the word, should have good body and richness. Of course, those highly elusive specimens with VERY INTENSE luster should also have very intense toning, but if you own one of these coins, I'm sure you already realize this fact!

Thank you for all your kind comments about my "Buying Tips" Dept...

When this newsletter was first getting its feet wet, the "Buying Tips Department" was created by your Editor out of sheer desperation in order to fill up space without wasting it! Since then, you have kindly expressed your pleasure with this department and I'm now happy to be able to include it as a regular feature in this publication.

If you have any special "songs" you would like me to play on the keyboard, please feel free to send your requests along! Actually, I have fifty different basic types in my repertoire, complete with a 144 possible variations. And that's not even counting the "golden oldies!"

The End Of The Trail!

Once again, it's time to pull the plug on another fun issue. Although I know some people may consider me daft, I really don't mind performing the labor required to get another issue of TCT to the printer! Oh sure, before it's all over, I yell, curse, scream, throw things around the room, fire my .380 auto at the neighbor's cat, stay up until three in the morning on occasion, and spend a couple of thousand bucks on phone calls to Helen & Don, but it REALLY is fun.

The main reason for this is I'm not alone in my endeavors! In reality, there are MANY people who help put this publication together and just for the record, I would like to run by them one at a time. Let's all give a BIG THANKS to:

Our tireless Helen & Don Carmody who don't mind strange phone calls containing inspiring questions such as, "Sorry to disturb your dinner, but would you happen to know Harry Horsewaller's membership number?" and/or "I realize I asked you this last night, but after writing it down, I threw away the pizza box I scribbled the information on." Believe me people, we did the right thing when we voted these two into office. They NEVER complain and are ALWAYS happy to help!

Another big thanks is due to Jan Mercer! Besides doing the layouts/graphics, she consistently aids her somewhat weird husband by mercifully key punching your letters/articles into our computers and contributing some really great ideas. However, and most of all, I wanted to express my thanks to YOU, the readers and contributors to this club publication. Your eager approval and input has made this newsletter what it is today! You should be proud of yourself!

Until next time, good luck and may all your deeds be worthy of commemoration!